

**SIGNS OF POWER:
ICONOCLASM IN PARIS, 1789–1795**

**by
Richard Simon CLAY**

**A thesis submitted to the University of London
in fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.**

University College London.

September, 1999.



The Power of Signs: Iconoclasm in Paris, 1789–1795

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about iconoclasm in Paris, 1789–1795. Previous full-length studies on the subject have condemned revolutionary iconoclasm as “vandalism” because, they claim, it showed barbaric disrespect for art’s sacred, aesthetic and historical values. This thesis argues that such condemnations are anachronistic because they fail to recognise the variety of ways in which late eighteenth-century Parisians used art, assessed its value and established appropriate ways of treating it. For many eighteenth-century Parisians, religious and political art had a vital role to play in mediating struggles for meaning in the wider world. Many Parisians did not privilege the aesthetic and historical values of art, nor did they believe that such values offered necessary and sufficient grounds for automatically respecting art’s physical integrity. This thesis explores the various ways in which different interest groups sought to preserve or destroy art for political and/or religious reasons, and the resulting tension between groups who did, or did not, believe that all art ought to be divorced from such struggles.

The thesis draws on a wider range of manuscript and printed sources than have been used in previous studies, even the more recent articles that have avoided condemning iconoclasm. In order to explain the scale of official iconoclasm in Year II, this thesis also covers a longer period than most of the available literature on the subject. The methodology employed in this study focuses on fewer spaces than is usual in this field of research, establishing connections between specific iconoclastic events and local, as well as national, discourses. Close analysis of iconoclastic actions, and representations of them, are used to argue from the specific to the general, explaining iconoclasm and the development of iconoclastic and preservationist government policies. It is shown that iconoclasm occurred because art symbolically mediated contested power relations during the revolution.

List of Contents

Title Page	p. 1
Abstract	p. 2
Contents	p. 3
List of Figures	p. 7
Acknowledgements	p. 12
List of Abbreviations	p. 15
Opening Illustration	p. 16

Chapter 1. An introduction to this study, its terminology and methods: “iconoclasm” in 1789

1.1 Introduction	p. 17
1.2 The attack on the <i>Barrière de la Conférence</i>	p. 17
1.3 The destruction of the busts of Necker and the Duc d’Orléans	p. 21
1.4 Terminological problems and methods	p. 27

Chapter 2. Iconoclastic actions and discourses, 1789–1790: an iconoclastic revolution?

2.1 Introduction	p. 39
------------------	-------

2.2 The re-signification of spaces in Paris and the treatment of images	p. 41
2.3 The value of images: the first wave of official iconoclasm	p. 53
2.4 Was the revolution iconoclastic from the outset?	p. 65
2.5 Conclusion	p. 69

Chapter 3. The use and abuse of religious art in Paris. 1791

3.1 Introduction	p. 71
3.2 The Civil Oath of the Clergy	p. 72
3.3 The first attack at the Théatins: the suspension of religious value	p. 78
3.4 The second attack at the Théatins: responses to iconoclasm	p. 91
3.5 Conclusion	p. 109

Chapter 4. Official and unofficial iconoclasm, from the *ancien régime* until the end of 1792

4.1 Introduction	p. 112
4.2 The treatment of statues of kings in Paris, during the <i>ancien régime</i>	p. 114
4.3 The use of the statues of kings as resources for protest during the French revolution 1789–1792	p. 128

4.4 The destruction of the statues of kings in public place in Paris and the implications for all royal images	p. 137
4.5 Royalist and Catholic responses to the iconoclasm of 1792	p. 153
4.6 Conclusion	p. 161

Chapter 5. Iconoclasm in Paris, 1793–1795

5.1 Introduction	p. 163
5.2 Power struggles and the treatment of signs of feudalism and signs of royalty	p. 164
5.3 The destruction of statues of kings at Notre-Dame	p. 174
5.4 Iconoclasm and revolutionary signs	p. 181
5.5 De-Christianisation and iconoclasm	p. 195
5.6 Thermidorian reactions to the iconoclasm of the Terror	p. 217
5.7 Conclusion	p. 221

<u>Chapter 6. Conclusion</u>	p. 224
------------------------------	--------

<u>Figures</u>	p. 227
----------------	--------

Bibliography of Cited Sources

p. 281

Manuscript Sources

p. 298

List of figures

fig. 1. Prieur, "Incendie de la Barrière de la Conférence, 12 juillet 1789", Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7746.

fig. 2. Detail of Prieur, "Incendie de la Barrière de la Conférence, 12 juillet 1789", Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7746.

fig. 3. J.F. Janinet, "Événement du 12 juillet: le matin. Curtius délivre les Portraits de Mgr le Duc d'Orléans et de M. Necker qui furent portés en triomphe par toute la ville et le Peuple crioit chapeau bas, pour marquer sa profonde vénération", Musée Carnavalet, R.G. 3745, de Vinck n 1507.

fig. 4. "The busts of d'Orléans and Necker carried to the Place Louis XV", Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7712

fig. 5. "Événement du 12 juillet 1789", Musée de la Révolution Française, Vizille, M. R. F. 1984 – 584

fig. 6. "Assassinat commis par le Prince Lambesc aux Thuilleries, le 12 juillet 1789", Musée de la Révolution Française, M. R. F 1984 – 597

fig. 7. N. F. Masquelier, "Figures de la Bastille", 1790, reproduced in Louis Millin, "Antiquités Nationales, ou recueil de monumens [sic] pour servir à l'Histoire générale de l'Empire Français, tels Tombeaux, Inscriptions, Statues, Vitraux, Fresques, etc.; tirés des Abbayes, Monastères, Châteaux, et autres lieux devenus Domaines Nationaux, Paris, 1790, t. I

fig. 8. N. F. Masquelier, "Figures de la Bastille", 1790, reproduced in Louis Millin, "Antiquités Nationales, ou recueil de monumens [sic] pour servir à l'Histoire générale de l'Empire Français, tels Tombeaux, Inscriptions, Statues, Vitraux, Fresques, etc.; tirés des Abbayes, Monastères, Châteaux, et autres lieux devenus Domaines Nationaux, Paris, 1790, t. I

fig. 9. Prieur, "Benediction of the flags of the National Guard in the church of Notre-Dame, 27 September 1789", Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7745

- fig. 10. "Démolition de la Bastille", Bibliothèque Nationale
- fig. 11. Hotiel, "La démolition de la Bastille. Juillet 1789", Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 600
- fig. 12. "La Liberté triomphe et détruit les abus", M. R. F. 1984– 633
- fig. 13. "Nuit du 4 au 5 août 1789 ou le délire patriotique", De Vinck 2770
- fig.14. "Je t'avais dit mon ami qu'ils nous feraient tout rendre", De Vinck 3076
- fig. 15. "le mannequin du Pape brûlé au Palais-Royal, le 6 avril 1791", Prieur, 1791. Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7732
- fig. 16. "Notre-Dame de Liesse à Saint Sulpice", Bibliothèque Nationale Est. Re 13, 95A73387
- fig. 17. "Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Délivrance à Saint-Etienne-des-Grès". Bibliothèque Nationale Est. Ee (2), 79B86718
- fig. 18. "Exemple au Conspirateur contre l'Etat", M. R. F 1996-32.
- fig. 19. "Matinée au Palais-Royal, 3 mai 1791", Carnavalet, inv. PC Hist 6 bis, de Vinck 3447 ancienne collection Liesville
- fig. 20. "Le curé de St. Accompagné de deux Diables descend dans l'Empire des Demons pour demander a Balzebuth peurs Princes des secours pour tacher s'il est possible d'empêcher l'exécution de la Constitution Civile Ecclésiastiques", M. R. F. 1990-46-93
- fig. 21. "Assemblée des prêtres non assermentés aux Théatins le 2 juin 1791", M. R. F. 1984-102.
- fig. 22. After Moreau, "La place Louis XV (1763)", Bibliothèque Nationale
- fig. 23. "Le foire St. Ovid", Musée Carnavalet

fig. 24. The equestrian statue of Henri IV from the Pont-Neuf. Bibliothèque Nationale

fig. 25. “Tous les soirs aussi, un groupe d’hommes mal vêtus, se portoit [sic] devant la statue [sic] de Henri IV, et forçoit [sic] les passans [sic] à la saluer”, M. R. F 1985-269

fig. 26. Prieur, “Incendie du Corps du Garde du Pont-Neuf, le 29 Août 1788”, Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 8928

fig. 27. “Louis XVI se montre a l’une des fenêtres de la grande salle de l’hôtel-de-ville, la Cocarde Nationale au chapeau”, M. R. F 1984-664

fig. 28. Moreau le Jeune, “Monument à ériger pour le roi”, 1790, M. R. F. 1994-44

fig. 29. Prieur, “Proclamation de la Patrie en danger. Les enrôlements des volontaires au Pont-Neuf”, Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7762

fig. 30. “Arrivée du roi et de la famille royale à Paris, le 6 octobre 1789”, M. R. F. 1990-46-53

fig. 31. “Le cortège du retour traverse la place Louis XV”, Bibliothèque Nationale

fig. 32. Prieur, “Fête de la Liberté en l’honneur des soldats de Châteauneuf”, M. R. F. 1995-381

fig. 33. After Boze, “Bonnet de la liberté, Presente au Roi par le peuple Français, le 20 juin 1792”, M. R. F

fig. 34. “Place des Victoires. Louis le Grand renversé pour faire place a la Colonne de la Liberté et de l’Egalité”, M. R. F. 1990-46-63

fig. 35. “Place Vendôme. Le plus Grand des Despotes, Renversé par la Liberté”, M. R. F. 1988-170

fig. 36. “Statue de Louis XIV abbatue, place des Victoires, les 11, 12, 13 août 1792”, Musée Carnavalet, inv. D. 7728

fig. 37. "Chute de la statue de Louis XIV Place Vendôme", Musée Carnavalet, inv. 3842 D.R.

fig. 38. "Chute de la statue de Louis XV Place Louis XV", Musée Carnavalet, inv. 3608 & 3609 D.R.

fig. 39. "Chute de la statue Louis XIII Place Royale", Musée Carnavalet, inv. 3823

fig. 40. "Chute de la statue de Henri IV. Pont-Neuf", Musée Carnavalet, inv. 3822

fig. 41. Augustin de St. Aubin, "Déstruction de la statue équestre de Louis XV", Musée Borély, inv. 68. 209

fig. 42. "Le degel de la nation", M. R. F. 1989-169

fig. 43. "Horribles Attentats des François commis à Paris le 10 Août 1792", Bibliothèque Nationale

fig. 44. Prieur, "Le marquis de Favras faisant amende honorable en face de Notre-Dame de Paris, le 19 février", Bibliothèque de l'Institut d'histoire de la Révolution

fig. 45. Plaster bust of Marat, Musée Carnavalet

fig. 46. "L'Ami du Peuple, Marat", Bibliothèque Nationale

fig. 47. "Voltaire au Panthéon", Bibliothèque Nationale

fig. 48. "Dieu, peuple, loi", c. 1793, M. R. F. 1987. 103

fig. 49. "La Confraire de St. Fiacre", Bibliothèque Nationale 79C91051

fig. 50. "Ego, Stultus propter Christum", M. R. F

fig. 51. "Convoi de très haut et puissant sieigneur des abus", M. R. F. 1984-1

fig. 52. “Il est écrit dans l’évangile de brûler la vigne inutile”, M. R. F., 1986-122

fig. 53. “Uns Sans [sic] culotte instrument des crimes dansant au milieu des horreurs, vient outrager l’humanité peurante auprès d’un centotaphe. Il croit voir l’ombre des victims de la revolution qui le saisit a la gorge. Cette effrayante apparition le suffoque et le renverse”, M. R. F., 1984-871

fig. 54. “Il prit, quita, reprit le cilice et la herre”, M. R. F, 1988-186

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by offering my thanks for academic assistance and, as with the rest of this thesis, these acknowledgements are organised chronologically. As such, my first thanks go to my parents, Mary and Gordon Clay, and my sister, Joanne, for giving me a childhood where debate of current affairs and history was the norm and not the exception. When, as an infant, a teacher told me I was “rubbish” they told me I was not, ever since then their faith in my academic ability has been a constant spur. It is in loving memory that I thank my late grandparents, Mary and Michael O’Brien, for teaching me about the Jarrow march, the pits and the shipyards when I was a “bairn”. I learnt from them the real importance of remembering the past. For my first meaningful encounters with history as an academic subject, I owe a debt of gratitude to William Wily, an ex-worker on the Glasgow fruit-market, he became the most exciting history teacher a teenager could hope for. William’s re-enactments of union speeches and his delight at engaging in argument about the past fueled my passion for history and set me in good stead for my BA in that subject. I arrived at the University of York as a history student and left a convert to art history. It was Malcolm Baker who introduced me to the fascinating challenges posed by a subject that was entirely new to me. If it was not for his depth of knowledge, enthusiasm, open-mindedness and tolerance of an eager but largely ignorant undergraduate, I might never have pursued art history any further. I also owe considerable thanks to Professor Richard Marx at York, he showed patience towards me beyond the call of duty when I was a student distracted from my studies by extra-curricula activities. Professor Marx imparted much important historical and methodological information to me while I studied with him, but he also took groups on surprising and exciting trips all over Yorkshire to look at objects first-hand. I will always measure my own teaching against the vitality of his.

Now I come to thank my supervisors at University College London, Professor Helen Weston and Dr. Tom Gretton, to whom I owe enormous gratitude for reasons that I can only touch upon here. I would not have begun this thesis had it not been for their challenging teaching during my MA year and the way in which they encouraged me to pursue my research. Their comments, questions and advice have been invaluable over the last four years. Their willingness to make time for me in their hectic schedules and their unstinting support have been of equal value. My relationship with them has been unreservedly positive and both of them have been, and remain, inspirational teachers and

researchers. I also owe thanks to Professor David Bindman at UCL, a fine teacher whose faith in my ability has been much appreciated. I owe thanks to Charles Ford and Dianna Dethloff whose assistance eased my transition from post-graduate researcher to post-graduate researcher/teacher. Their support helped me get the most from my teaching. Of course, I also owe thanks to my students for their thought provoking discussions and essays. In a less direct way I offer thanks to all members of the UCL History of Art Department for their contributions to a department so conducive to research. So many of my post-graduate colleagues also deserve thanks for the inspiration that their work and conversations have offered me, but I must single out Dr. Louis Govier, Dr. Satish Padyar, Dr. Yung Yuang Yang, Simon Baker, Jamie Mulherron, Warren Carter, Jonathon Black, Nick Grindle and Francesca Berry.

I have been surprised by the level of academic encouragement and help that I have received from beyond the UCL department and I owe thanks to many scholars. First and foremost I would like to thank Philippe Bordes and Alain Chevalier, from the *Musée de la Révolution* in Vizille, for their generosity in supplying advice on and access to wonderful collections of source material in an unparalleled working environment. I also owe especial thanks to the Instituto de Investigaciones Estheticas in Mexico for inviting me to speak at their colloquium on “The Destruction of Art”. It was there that I met Dario Gamboni, Francesco Pellizzi and Orville Wright, all of whom offered me plentiful support and inspiration. I would also like to thank Bruno Latour, Alison Yarrington and Alison Sleeman for their helpful comments and encouragement. I also am grateful to the staff of all of the institutions whose resources I have used while preparing this thesis: the UCL and University of London libraries, the Warburg Institute, the Institute for Historical Research, the British Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris and the Archives Nationales. In addition, I owe thanks to the British Academy for the grant they awarded me so that I could pursue this project and to the Henry Moore Foundation for offering a fellowship for the next two years. Finally, my research in Paris would not have been possible, nor my political education even nearly complete, had it not been for the generosity and vitality of François Tardieu. She offered me accommodation and friendship in Paris on occasions when I desperately needed both.

The first of my non-academic thanks must be paid to my mother and father. Their love has brightened many a dark day in the last three years – they are parents beyond compare and leave me wanting for nothing. Furthermore, I am endlessly grateful that, while my sister got my share of editorial skills, she was also blessed with a generous nature that has

made her help and love invaluable to me. I am also lucky to have fine friends who exhibit an unexpected tolerance for late-night discussions about art history. My especial gratitude goes to Murtle V. Rich, Richard Davidson-Houston, Natasha Wyeth, Luke Whitehead, Daniel Lidyard, Tammy and the whole Fullwood family (South Emsall branch). Above all others I wish to thank Yvonne Fullwood. Yvonne's dedication to her academic career in science, her intellectual rigour and her inquisitiveness have been an endless source of inspiration to me. Without her patience and her support I would not have completed this thesis in three years, nor would I have completed it a happy man. Thanks to Yvonne, regardless of set backs, every day begins and ends well for me.

I dedicate this thesis to my family.

Apologies

I would be grateful if readers of this thesis would ignore some minor formatting errors. The first of these is the absence of abbreviation marks after the phrase "op cit" in all footnotes. My computer is intent on capitalising the phrase if full stops are placed at the end of them. Secondly, some pages in chapter 2 have bold black lines at their base. I have been unable to remove them and I did not have the time retype the whole chapter in order to avoid this problem.

List of Abbreviations

A. N.	Archives Nationales (Paris)
A. P. P.	Archives de la Préfecture de la Police (Paris)
A.PW	Administration of Public Works
B. L.	British Library
CoM	Commission of Monuments
CPI	Committee of Public Instruction
CPS	Committee of Public Safety
M. R. F	Musée de la Révolution Française, Vizille
N. A. F	Nouvelles Archives Française (Bibliothèque Nationale – Richelieu, Paris)
SRRW	Society of Republican Revolutionary Women
TCA	Temporary Commission of Arts

Head of a king of Judaea, removed from Notre-Dame de Paris in 1793. Musée Cluny

“Here I am the barbarian because they do not understand me”¹

¹ Ovid, as cited by Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the title page of his “Discourse on the Arts and Sciences”. Peter Gay, “Rousseau, the Bastie Political Writings”, 1987, p. 1.

Chapter 1

An Introduction to this Study, its Terminology and Methods. Iconoclasm in 1789

1.1. Introduction

By focusing on the discussion surrounding two examples of iconoclastic incidents from the opening weeks of the French revolution, the first chapter of this thesis seeks to achieve several aims. The first is to emphasise from the outset of this study the diversity of iconoclastic events that we will be looking at from the period 1789–1795. It is also important to offer a brief survey of the literature available on the subject of French revolutionary iconoclasm. Early in section 1.2, I will begin this survey by discussing some of the major problems associated with the books about so-called “revolutionary vandalism”. At the end of section 1.3, I will complete this survey by considering other available texts on the subject, discussing them in relation to the approach and method used in this thesis. In section 1.3, I will also deal with this chapter’s third aim, to tackle the terminological problems associated with the word *iconoclasm*, thus explaining the way in which the word will be used. However, this chapter begins with a discussion of two iconoclastic incidents that occurred on 12 July 1789.

1.2 The attack on the *Barrière de la Conférence*

On 12 July 1789, a large crowd of Parisians set fire to the *Barrière de la Conférence* (also known as the *Barrière des Bonhommes*). The gatehouse itself, designed by Ledoux, was emptied of its contents and then two statues of allegorical figures were attacked; they represented the regions to which the road through the *barrière* led – Normandy and Brittany.¹ I have found no explicit textual references to the precise nature of the damage

¹ The former statue was produced by Lucas de Montigny and the latter by Jean-Guillaume Moitte. “La Révolution Française – Premier Empire. Dessins du musée Carnavalet”, Paris, 1983, p. 130.

done to the two sculptures on this day. However, Prieur produced a drawing of the sacking of the barrier and it was subsequently made into a print for the *Tableaux historique de la Révolution* series (fig. 1).² In the image one can clearly see the head and shoulders of one of the sculptures being broken off (fig. 2).

Identifying the motivation for the attack is relatively straightforward, Parisians were angry about the prices of essential goods and the customs gates were sites where the *fermiers généraux* levied charges on goods entering the city and this inflated the cost of living within Paris. To attack the barrier was to attack the customs system directly and symbolically. While words spoken against the *fermiers généraux* were fleeting and ephemeral, burning out one of their buildings and attacking its signifying statues offered a more permanent signification of the crowd's discontent. Furthermore, the Estates General had been convoked in Versailles on 5 May 1789 and on 17 June many representatives of the Third Estate, joined by a few members of the other two estates, had declared themselves to be the National Assembly. On 20 June the new assembly, finding its meeting room closed, had met in a nearby tennis court and declared that it would sit until a new constitution for France had been drawn-up and the crisis caused by the national debt had been solved. But paranoia soon began to sweep through Paris; it was feared that the king – angered by the defiance of these representatives of the three Estates and the support they had among Parisians – was encircling the capital city with troops in order to stem the tide of reform.³ In this context, it is possible to interpret the attack on the *Barrière de la Conférence* and attacks on other barriers as being acts intended to signify that the city's boundaries were under the control of its people. It was the authority of the crowd and not the Crown that now protected the city's entrance points.

It is difficult to know whether or not the people involved in the burning of the *Barrière de la Conférence* knew that the statues that served as one of their attack's focal points represented the two north western provinces. Certainly, it is possible that some of them

² The first prints in the series of the *Tableaux historiques de la Révolution Française* did not appear until 1792. Thus, the fact that their production was not closely contemporary to the events depicted might lead one to question the veracity of the motifs within the prints and their depiction of events. However, it is worth adding that Prieur's prints of other events tend to include motifs whose accuracy is easily verified by other textual sources. It would appear that Prieur sought to produce images whose central motifs were historically accurate.

³ Needless to say, not all Parisians felt negatively about a royalist military intervention. In fact, during their meeting of 10 July 1789, the District of S.t Eustache had decided to send the *curé* of the parish church to thank the king for having restored order in Paris and to ask him to send troops to surround the city. Alexandre Tuetey, "Répertoire générale des sources manuscrites de l'histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution Française", Paris, 1890, Vol. 2 (number 2 of the Constituent Assembly), Doc. 633.

had seen and remembered the exhibition of Moitte's *Normandie* figure at the Salon of 1787.⁴ However, given that similar attacks on other barriers also occurred, it seems unlikely that the intention of those who mutilated the sculptures was to signify an attack on the specific provinces. Rather, the statues, standing on top of guardhouses, represented the nation-wide nature of the power of the *fermiers généraux* and it was this which was the target. The imposing masses of the gatehouses' architecture, like that of the other ones recently constructed around Paris at great expense, signified not only the power but also the wealth of the *fermiers généraux*; wealth that had been accumulated by taxing the Third Estate. Thus, the monuments were not destroyed because they were allegorical representations of distant parts of the kingdom, but because they connoted a system of taxation that made subsistence in Paris expensive.

Had they not omitted to mention the attack on the *Barrière de la Conférence*'s sculptures, Gautherot, Réau and Souchal – the authors of the only books devoted to revolutionary iconoclasm – would without doubt have called it an act of “vandalism”.⁵ This study will refrain from using that particular label because it connotes the barbarity of iconoclasts and reveals more about the historians who have used the term than it does about their subjects. Gautherot, Réau and Souchal all argue that attacks on objects that they categorise as “art” are indicative of iconoclasts' ignorance and lack of respect for the highest products of civilisation. Réau argues that one of the revolutionary “vandals” motives was to destroy beautiful objects because “like a thorn in the eye [...] beauty offends and humiliates them. Inferior beings that are conscious of their inferiority instinctively hate all that exceeds them. It was this stormy hatred that animated the sans-culottes of the revolution”.⁶ But this kind of understanding of civilisation and barbarity, and indeed of beauty, fails to recognise that the category of art and the modes of treatment deemed appropriate for its objects, are historically and culturally specific, as are the criteria people have used to assess the value of representational objects. While Réau also lists “religious intolerance” as a motive for acts of “vandalism”, Souchal uses more forceful language, accusing the sculptor Daujon, who was involved in official suppressions of signs during the

⁴ Ibid. p. 130.

⁵ The three texts are: Gustave Gautherot, “Le Vandalisme Jacobin. Dénominations Administratives d'Archives, d'Objets d'Art, de Monuments Religieux à l'Epoque Révolutionnaire”, Paris, 1914; Louis Réau, “Histoire du Vandalisme. Les Monuments Détruits de L'Art Français”, Paris, 1994; François Souchal, “Le Vandalisme de la Révolution”, Paris, 1990. Strictly speaking, Réau's book is not written exclusively on the subject of revolutionary iconoclasm. It begins with a section on iconoclasm before the revolution and ends with a long discussion of the destruction of art in the years of the Empire until the Fifth Republic. Nevertheless, more than 400 pages are dedicated to the period of the revolution, making this the largest single study of French revolutionary iconoclasm.

⁶ Réau op. cit, p. 14. All translations are the author's own unless otherwise stated.

revolution, of having a “diabolical imagination”.⁷ Gautherot said that Daujon suffered from cupidity – a claim I will refute in chapter 5 – the historian also catalogued the art that the sculptor “pursued [...] like the human victims of the September massacres” in St. Sulpice.⁸ Souchal went so far as to declare that “In the absence of a sense of the sacred, of which one has to admit [Daujon] was absolutely deprived, could one not expect a certain degree of respect for the work of his predecessors?”⁹ Remarkably little is known about Daujon’s career as a sculptor. The only sculpture attributed to him is a Medusa’s head in the Louvre.¹⁰ However, while the length of this study will not allow consideration of Daujon’s whole career, his work during the revolution will act as a useful case study in this thesis, especially in chapter 5, and I will defend Daujon’s reputation from these onslaughts and show them to be unfounded.

The main problem with the work of these condemnatory historians is that their judgmental stance limits them to listing and lamenting acts of so-called “vandalism”. As I will show later in this study, they conveniently overlook or fail to seek out evidence that might contradict their haughty criticisms of iconoclasts. Réau is satisfied to label all revolutionary iconoclasm as “Jacobin vandalism” which is quite a ridiculous position, given that iconoclastic attacks, words and images were used by a myriad of non-Jacobin factions during the period. What makes Réau’s stance even more difficult to understand is the fact that his discussion of revolutionary iconoclasm is preceded by several hundred pages dealing with pre-revolutionary “vandalism”. Yet, he seems to see no connection between the earlier events and revolutionary iconoclasm; he misses the opportunity to explore the idea that iconoclasm before, during and after the revolution could be regarded as constituting a set of residual cultural responses to images. Gautherot and Souchal, for their part, pay no heed at all to any pre-revolutionary precedents. While this thesis focuses heavily on the revolutionary period, only occasionally discussing the treatment of images during the *ancien régime*, I think it is appropriate to point out that before 1789 it was not unusual for Catholic clergymen to have religious images removed from churches, re-contextualised, altered or destroyed.¹¹ Does this mean that Souchal thinks the ministers of the religion he is so quick to defend were “vandals” just like Daujon?

⁷ François Souchal op cit., p. 56.

⁸ Gustave Gautherot op cit, p. 153

⁹ Souchal op cit, p. 58.

¹⁰ S. Lami, “Dictionnaire des Sculpteurs de l’Ecole Française”, Paris, 1910, pp. 251–252.

¹¹ For example, the giant statue of St. Christopher was moved from the nave of Notre-Dame de Paris in 1786, its absence was noted by an English visitor in 1792. Anon, “A journal during a residence in France from the beginning of August to the middle of December, 1792. To which is added an account of the remarkable events that happened at Paris from that time to the death of the late King”, London, 1793, vol.

Turning our attention back to the iconoclasm at the *Barrière de la Conférence*, it is clear that this was not an attack by “vandals” who were eager to destroy art because its beauty surpassed them. Rather, the iconoclasts used the sculptures at the gate as a resource for public protest and as a means of signifying the political positions of those involved. Implicitly, the iconoclasts’ actions show that they had an understanding of how the statues worked as signifiers of the authority that was being resisted. The iconoclasts were not ignorant individuals, but people who understood how material signs worked. The beauty of the objects was not an issue: in the forthcoming chapters I will seek to show that many Parisians did not assess representational objects’ value principally in terms of aesthetics. Instead, they evaluated material signs in terms more closely associated with the objects’ functions, be they political or religious. To simply list and lament iconoclastic attacks is to turn one’s back on their revealing complexity and to ignore the ways in which many late eighteenth-century Parisians actually thought about and used such signs. It is these complexities that this thesis seeks to explore. We will now consider a second example of an early revolutionary act of iconoclasm that is both similar to and very different from the one discussed above.

1.3 The destruction of the busts of Necker and the Duc d’Orléans

On 12 July 1789, the same day as the *Barrière de la Conférence* was attacked, the news that the king had dismissed the popular minister Necker and that the monarch’s reformist

1, p. 85. Equally, two fonts in St. Sulpice were described in an eighteenth-century guidebook as Egyptian “sepulchral urns” that had been “consecrated to the true God”. In effect, their use in the church had re-contextualised them and changed their religious function. Does this show respect for the sacred? D***, “Voyage Pittoresque de Paris, ou indication de tout ce qu’il y a de plus beau dans cette Ville, en Peinture, Sculpture et Architecture”, Paris, 1778, p. 352. And, in the sacristy of St. Sulpice, the same guidebook described “an old tomb used by the priests to wash their hands”. Again, this is an example of the clerical re-contextualisation of a religious object, showing little respect for its original sacred function and its physical integrity. Ibid., p. 356. One could add countless examples of alterations to church buildings that meant the removal or alteration of religious representational objects. For example, two of St. Eustache’s chapels were destroyed during the rebuilding of the church’s façade in the middle of the eighteenth-century, along with the wall paintings that adorned them. Anon, “Notice descriptive et historique sur l’Eglise et la Paroisse Saint-Eustache de Paris”, Paris, 1855.

cousin the Duc d'Orléans had been exiled begin to filter through to Paris. Many Parisians took the news to be a further indication that the king, in his desperation to hang onto his power, wished to reverse the political and social changes being instigated by the National Assembly. The hopes of the pro-reform section of the Parisian Third Estate had been pinned on Necker and members of the Third Estate had been encouraged by the news that d'Orléans had joined their representatives after the Tennis Court Oath. In May, many Parisians had complained that the electoral-college system set up to select representatives to the Estates General was unfair because the Third Estate would not receive the proportion of representatives that its size warranted.¹² Necker was regarded by many as the people's champion because he called for and obtained the doubling of number of Third Estate representatives.¹³ Hearing of his dismissal, a crowd gathered in the Duc d'Orléans' Palais Royal discussed the events and resolved to visit one of Curtius' wax-work shops (it is not clear which) where they requested busts of Necker, d'Orléans and Louis XVI.¹⁴ Having handed over the other two busts, Curtius made a fateful decision – he refused to give an effigy of Louis XVI to the crowd, claiming it was too fragile.¹⁵ From here the crowd, with their hats removed to show their veneration for the men represented by the wax busts, moved off to process around the town, as alluded to in the title of J.F. Janinet's high quality aquatint, "Événement du 12 juillet: le matin. Curtius délivre les Portraits de Mgr le Duc d'Orléans et de M. Necker qui furent portés en triomphe par toute la ville et le Peuple criait chapeau bas, pour marquer sa profonde vénération", (fig. 3).¹⁶

The crowd draped the two busts that were the centerpieces of their parade with black crêpe, a sign of mourning.¹⁷ The intention appears to have been to signify that the crowd

¹² Anon, untitled, B.L., F. 224. 73 & 74.

¹³ John McManners, "The French Revolution and the Church", London, 1969, p.16.

¹⁴ It is not clear whether Curtius' establishment in the Palais Royal or on the Boulevard du Temple was the source of the busts. "Le Palais Royal" catalogue of the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, Paris, 1988, pp. 179–180.

¹⁵ Jean Adhemar, "Les Musée de cire en France, Curtius, le 'banquet royal' les têtes coupées" in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1978, 2, pp. 206–207.

¹⁶ The print was produced for the "Gravures historiques des principaux événements depuis l'ouverture des Etats Généraux et Code des lois décrétées par l'Assemblée Nationale pour être déposé dans les archives". "Le Palais Royal" op cit, pp. 184–185. This image adds further to the confusion over the starting-point of the impromptu procession because the handing over of the busts appears to have taken place in the shade of the Palais Royal's arcades. Nevertheless, the consensus amongst historians is that, in fact, the busts were taken from the Boulevard du Temple establishment.

¹⁷ An English observer remarked that the busts were "contemplated with a kind of religious veneration". Henry Frederic Groenvelt, "Letter Containing an Account of the Late Revolution in France and Observations on the Constitution, Laws, Mores and Institutions of the English", London, 1792. One could argue that covering the images with cloth connoted the practice of covering some Catholic statues that were only unveiled on special occasions.

thought the dismissal of Necker and the exile of the Duc d'Orléans were losses to the revolutionary cause that were comparable to the men's deaths. The two men who were represented lived on in a physical sense, but they had suffered the ignominy of a public political death following their removal from power. If Curtius had given the crowd the bust of the reigning king and it had been treated in the same way as the other busts, the events could have appeared to observers to have had a significantly different meaning. Would it have seemed like a threat of the king's own impending dismissal or exile? Could it even have appeared to be an act of mourning which was based on the assumption that the king no longer had power, having been deprived of it by the same bad counsel that led to the dismissal of Necker and exile of d'Orléans?¹⁸ Given the events that were soon to come to pass, the question is a significant one.

Working their way to the Place Vendôme, where governmental offices were based, the procession encountered a detachment of German royal guards.¹⁹ The soldiers demanded that the busts be surrendered, but the crowd refused. The dragoons resorted to force, Prudhomme reported that "[...] the bust of M. Necker was smashed by the strike of a saber; the defense of that of the Duc d'Orléans cost the life of two men."²⁰ The bloody clash continued in the Place de Louis XV around the statue of the king, before moving into the carrousel at the entrance to the Tuileries palace. The ferocity of the crowd's repression by the guards led to a furious response on the part of Parisians angry at such an abuse of royal power by the Prince de Lambesc, who had headed the attack. The already heightened state of concern regarding the intentions of the king's soldiers was exacerbated to the point that Parisians began to arm themselves. On 14 July 1789, crowds were to search for arms at the Maison Commune, as well as making the more widely renowned assault on the Bastille – arguably, for the same reason.²¹

So, as Adhémar has suggested, is it possible that the German guardsmen would have hesitated to launch such an attack had the image of the king been alongside those that were

¹⁸ Arlette Farge has discussed the fact that it was not uncommon in the eighteenth century for people disappointed with some aspect of a French king's reign and to blame poor counsel for having led him astray. Arlette Farge, "Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France", London, 1994.

¹⁹ Tom Gretton has brought an interesting question to my attention, regarding the German guards. Were they Protestants or Catholics? The question is not one that my research has been able to answer but, clearly, their religion might be regarded as having influenced their behaviour with regard to the busts. One could argue that Protestant guards might have been more inclined towards iconophobia than Catholic ones. However, as my discussion of the incident suggests, the guards' actions were principally determined by their role as keepers of public order.

²⁰ L. M. Prudhomme, "Histoire Impartiale de Paris", 1824, Vol. 1, p. 181–182.

²¹ "La Révolution Française – Premier Empire" op cit, p. 131.

charged at? One has to wonder, given the potential ambiguity of the admittedly counterfactual inclusion of Louis XVI's likeness, whether the guards would really have chosen not to intervene forcefully, wary of offending the symbolic presence of the king. Could the course of the revolution have been significantly altered if Curtius had not refused the monarch's bust to the crowd? Responses to these questions are contingent upon one's interpretation of the soldiers' motives for suppressing what they clearly regarded as an illegal gathering that constituted a dangerous disturbance of the peace. It is difficult to believe that, when a guard struck down the bust of Necker and others pursued that of d'Orléans, they meant to visit violence upon these powerful men symbolically. While d'Orléans' exile clearly rendered him politically illegitimate in royalist discourse, he remained a prince of the blood and a symbolic attack on him was, implicitly, an attack on the royal family. Equally, Necker, although dismissed, was scarcely an enemy of the king and was, in fact, to be subsequently re-appointed. However, the images had been appropriated by a crowd that was using them as foci for protest against the king. It was not the busts' subjects that were being attacked symbolically by the royal guards, rather it was the connotations of the images as signified by their use within the protest. By destroying the busts, the guards were symbolically destroying the rallying point of the crowd in a way comparable to the seizing of an enemy's colours in battle. If one considers the charge of the guards in this way, one must wonder whether the bust of Louis XVI would have been treated any differently by the soldiers, especially given that its inclusion in the procession would have been interpretable as a symbolic insult, even a threat, to the king. To claim otherwise, is to suggest that the soldiers' actions were not principally motivated by the desire to maintain public order and end an apparently anti-monarchical protest.

The issue of public order is crucial in many of the representations of this event. The print after Prieur's drawing, "The busts of d'Orléans and Necker carried to the Place Louis XV", (fig. 4) depicts the moment when the confrontation has moved from the Place Vendôme to the Place Louis XV. The protesters, trying to escape with the surviving bust of d'Orléans, run and hide from the saber blows of the soldiers. Only three members of the crowd are actively involved in responding violently. One, on the near left, levels a musket, aiming it at a soldier on horseback who has his saber poised to strike. The other two are striking the same guard from his right hand side. Two other men, standing just behind the rifleman, are charging another gun ready to shoot. Other members of the crowd use sticks to ward off the guards' blows. The clear implication is that members of the crowd are simply defending themselves from attack. This point is emphasised by the

fore-grounding of soldiers on horse-back who are raised threateningly above the civilians. The movement of the crowd from right to left, away from the guard who is on horseback on the right, further underlines the fact that it is the soldiers who are the instigators of this violent breaching of the peace. As with his depiction of the attack on the statue at the *Barrière de la Conférence*, Prieur's illustration unambiguously represents the perpetrators of violence upon sculptures as being the instigators of a violent disturbance of the public peace. This tendency provides an interesting contrast with Janinet's print of the removal of the busts from Curtius' shop, a scene of reverential peace. Taken together with images of the later confrontation, this print makes it clear that the images' audience was not meant to regard the bust-carrying crowd as being the locus of symbolic or actual violence.

Other prints tended to focus on the moments when the confrontation had moved to the carrousel of the Tuileries gardens where the crowd sought to escape the German guards. Many of the people promenading in this area were caught up in the rush of escaping protestors and charging troops. This scene allowed *imagiers* the optimum opportunity to depict the Prince Lambesc and the military action he led in a negative light, the events taking on the air of a massacre of innocents. In a print entitled "Événement du 12 juillet 1789" (fig. 5), two women try to shield themselves in the right foreground and others can be seen fleeing. In the left foreground an old man's gesture shows his surprise – the text under the image reports that he was struck by a saber. Another print, "Assassinat commis par le Prince Lambesc aux Thuilleries [sic], le 12 juillet 1789" (fig. 6), like the Prieur image mentioned above, shows soldiers on horseback towering menacingly above civilians in flight, including a mother and child in the left foreground.²² D'Orléans' bust is not visible in either of the carrousel images and it is possible that the two men who died defending it, did so in the Place Louis XV. Once the action had moved into the Tuileries, the crowd was entirely without symbolic focus and the onus of culpability was placed squarely on the German guards. This point is emphasised in the prints by representing the victims as old men, women and children.

The inclusion of the statue of Louis XV in each of the aforementioned prints served to broaden the implied criticism of the abuse of royal power. In Prieur's design, the king's horse points towards the left-hand foreground as if it is moving to cut off the civilians' escape route. The statue's head turns slightly towards the right-hand side of the image, casting its gaze impassively over the soldiers on horseback who are attacking those who

²² This print appeared in the newspaper, *Révolutions de Paris*.

defend the busts of men whose power his grandson, Louis XVI, has diminished. In comparison to the statue, the busts are low in the composition, marginalised and small. In the prints that depict the scene around the carousel, the equestrian Louis XV is raised above the charging guards and like them he appears to be racing towards the viewer who is positioned amongst the victims of the massacre. With his baton resting between his right hand and thigh, the king appears to be marshalling the charge. Thus, a statue that had been built to glorify the monarchy was used in the prints as a device to connote the callous disengagement of the king from the safety and concerns of his subjects. These scenes all take place in royal spaces open to the general public for leisure purposes: the royal square of the Place Louis XV and the entrance to the royal garden of the Tuileries palace. Indeed, the scenes centered in the carousel show ladies and gentlemen of leisure who have suddenly found themselves caught up in a violent episode. Thus, one can argue that in the prints the intended function of the spaces is contrasted with their actual function on the day depicted. The promise of royal generosity that the surrendering of the spaces to the public denoted, is implicitly contrasted with the actual harshness of Louis XVI's rule as connoted by his guards and the presence of his grandfather's statue. The intended and actual uses of spaces and of their signifiatory schemes of sculpture are used as resources by print-makers seeking to denote a particular event and connote its significance. The iconoclastic motif of the busts' destruction serves the same purpose. For those who saw such prints and used them in the process of imagining events not witnessed personally, their memory of a key revolutionary episode, important royal spaces and of a major royal statue were influenced in a way which was mutually interdependent. In chapter four we will return to this idea of the interconnection of events, royal spaces, royal sculpture and the representation of each in words and pictures.

To conclude this section it ought to be noted that, if the attack on the busts of Necker and d'Orléans can be considered to be acts of iconoclasm then, in Prieur's image, it is the representatives of royal authority who are the iconoclasts. In contrast, the iconoclasts in Prieur's representation of the events at the *Barrière de la Conférence* are the people and not the authorities. In both prints, iconoclasm accompanies disorder and violence, in the former the violence is visited upon people and in the latter upon objects. The key point to make here is that from the outset of the revolution iconoclasm was used by groups of people with very different goals and for very different reasons; we are considering a phenomenon of great diversity that cannot simply be dismissed as "Jacobin vandalism".

1.4 Terminological problems and methods

It is now important that we ask the questions, “what is meant by *iconoclasm*?” and “what problems does its usage pose in the context of this study?” As Dario Gamboni has recently noted, the substitution of the word *iconoclasm* for *vandalism*, is problematic. My discussion of the terminology will focus on highlighting problems associated with the two components of the word *iconoclasm*: i.e. *icon* and *clasm*. It will be argued that the word *icon* has developed several different meanings, all of which are deployed by art historians and some of which are mutually exclusive. As a result, it is not clear precisely what one wishes to signify as being attacked when one uses the word “iconoclasm” to describe an act or event. I will identify problems with each of the meanings of the word *icon*. I will also argue that it is often inappropriate to label the kinds of incidents discussed in this thesis with the word *clasm*, coming from the Greek word *klasm*, meaning *breaker*.²³

The first way in which the word *icon* can be understood is etymological. Gamboni notes that, “‘iconoclasm’ does raise the expectation that attack and rejection concern images”,²⁴ because *icon* comes from the Greek word *eikon*, meaning image.²⁵ Gamboni adds that Réau rejected the term *iconoclasm* because it precluded the inclusion of attacks on architecture.²⁶ Perhaps because it was inappropriate to go back to such first principles in his book, Gamboni does not point out that Réau’s objection has a major flaw because it rests on a particular “common sense” concept of what an image is. Like Réau, the *Petit Robert* dictionary assumes in its definition of *image*, as the word has been used in French since *circa* 1160, that it means a “representation of an object or a person by the graphic or plastic arts”. This definition jeopardises Réau’s objection, because church architecture can be said to be a representation of the crucifix.²⁷ Like architecture, silverware is not included in the *Petit Robert*’s list of the arts that produce images, but a Catholic chalice can be said to be a representation of the receptacle from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper. Thus, some architecture and some artifacts have “imageness” based on representation through a common-sense concept of visual “likeness”. But, as Pierce has written, “Any two objects in nature resemble each other and indeed in themselves just as

²³ “Collins Concise English Dictionary”, London, 1995.

²⁴ Dario Gamboni “The Destruction of Art. Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution”, London, 1997, p. 19.

²⁵ Collins op cit.

²⁶ Gamboni op cit, p. 19.

²⁷ “Le Petit Robert”, Paris, 1993.

any other two; it is only with reference to our senses and our needs that one resemblance counts for more than another”.²⁸ Equally, it can be argued that any object can be said to represent another and, as such, be an image. As a result, *iconoclasm* is a word that could, in theory, signify the destruction of any object. Therefore, understood in its etymological sense, *iconoclasm* is arguably too general a term to describe the human activity that is the subject of this thesis.

Secondly, the term *icon* can be understood according to the way it is used in semiotic theory. Pierce, who along with Saussure was one of the founding fathers of semiotics (the study of sign systems), developed a trichotomous categorisation of objects (but also of less material meaning vehicles) that act as signs. While he recognised the problems caused by the concept of resemblance he, nevertheless, ordered the three categories according to the resemblance they bore to the object they signified. In ascending order of resemblance his categories were symbol, index and icon. Any sign which “denotes its object *by virtue of* a general association of ideas that is in the nature of a habit or a convention Pierce designates as a *symbol*”.²⁹ “If the sign denotes its object *by virtue of* a real cause-and-effect link that holds between sign and object, Pierce designates that sign as an *index*”.³⁰ “If the sign denotes its object *by virtue of* a real similarity that holds between physical properties of the sign and physical properties of its object, Pierce designates that sign as an *icon*.”³¹ Thus, the word *icon* can mean either *image*, in its etymological sense, or a specific kind of image, in its Piercian semiotic sense.

Using the word “iconoclasm” to denote the destruction of a particular kind of sign that resembles its object still poses several fundamental problems. For example, in Piercian terms, we could not correctly describe the decapitation of the statue that represented a French region at the *Barrière de la Conférence*, as *iconoclasm*. The statue did not resemble its object in any meaningful way; it was an allegorical figure that denoted its object by virtue of “habit or convention”; it was a *symbol* and not an *icon*.³² So could the

²⁸ Winfred Nöth, “Handbook of Semiotics”, Bloomington, 1990, p. 123.

²⁹ Sándor Hervej, “Semiotic Perspectives”, London, 1982, p. 31.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 30.

³¹ Ibid. It has to be noted that the scope of this definition is broad. For example, Pierce considered diagrams to be *icons* of their object because they represented the “relations of the [physical] qualities” of the object (my square brackets). The citation is taken from Nöth op cit, p. 122).

³² We could say that the marble of the statue was a similar colour to parts of the regional landscape/seascape/sky and was, therefore, iconic. Clearly, the lack of specificity in such an argument renders it ludicrous because the same could be said of any marble hued object, the statue becomes a sign for anything with this property. Once again, we are lost in the quandary of *resemblance*, whereby

problem be resolved by clearly stating that a new terminology, based on Pierce's categories, will be applied in this study? A typology whereby the *Conférence* incident would be labeled "symboloclasm"? One way of explaining why this is a ridiculous suggestion, is to consider how we would use such a typology to label the attack on the busts of Necker and d'Orléans by the German royal guards. Can such a trichotomous set of labels work adequately with this example?

Pierce specifically designated portraits as being a prime example of an *icon*.³³ In fact, semioticians who have accepted Morris's argument that "a sign is iconic to the extent to which it itself shares the properties of its denotata" and that, "iconicity is thus a question of degree", might well be inclined to consider portrait busts to be almost quintessentially *iconic*; they map the relative positions of each feature of the depicted head.³⁴ Indeed, the busts of Necker and d'Orléans were almost certainly made by Curtius as "life masks", thus closely resembling their subjects and therefore being iconic, but also being indexes of the process of the images' making. Once the busts were destroyed their iconicity was diminished because they only fragmentarily resembled what they denoted, but the remnants became indexical signs of the process of their own breaking. The debris of the busts could, therefore, be regarded as having been indexical signs for two different reasons at the same time, because their method of production and their method of destruction made them signifiers of two different cause-and-effect processes. However, many of the members of the crowd that processed through the streets of Paris with the busts of Necker and d'Orléans would never have seen either man in the flesh. Therefore, the vast majority of people on each side of the confrontation over the busts thought of them as being "likenesses" not on the basis of perceived observation of signifier and signified but on the basis of received knowledge of one or both. Such knowledge could have been acquired either by comparing the busts to other extant portraits, or by accepting the word of Curtius or someone else that the objects were accurate representations of the

everything is an *icon* of everything else. It was on these grounds that Bierman declared, "there are no iconic signs". Cited in Ibid. p. 126.

³³ Nöth op cit, p. 121. He also gave paintings and photographs as examples of *icons*. One could no doubt add sculpture to this list. One does, of course, have to recognise that Pierce's concept of the *icon* becomes extremely problematic if one asks whether an abstract painting is *iconic*.

³⁴ Citation from Nöth op cit, p. 123. Paul Bouissac has noted the argument that, "there are degrees of iconicity, and that the signs that exhibit the greatest number of details are more iconic than the ones whose perceptual features are reduced to a minimum (e.g. a colour photograph is more iconic than a black-and-white photograph, and a photograph is more iconic than an ink drawing)." Paul Brouissac, "Iconicity and Pertinence", in Paul Brouissac (ed.), *Iconicity: Essays on the Nature of Culture*, Tübingen, 1986, p. 198. Pending more research by cognitive psychologists and neurologists, it would appear to be impossible to prove whether a colour photograph is more or less iconic than a portrait bust. Which is more important to the cognitive process of recognising resemblance, colour or depth?

said men's appearances. But, if the belief that the busts resembled their objects was based on anything other than direct observation by any given individual, then the objects functioned as *symbols* for them and not as *icons*. That is to say, it was only by "habit" or "convention" that most of the people involved in the violent struggle could have said that they knew the busts denoted that which they did.³⁵ Without either knowledge of such conventional rules to determine what was denoted by the busts, or knowledge of what their objects looked like, the busts could still function as *icons* but only of themselves or copies of themselves, or of unknown men. Thus, it can be said that for different members of the crowd the busts functioned as *icons* and/or as *indexes* (potentially for two different reasons) and/or as *symbols*. By referring to the busts' destruction by the soldiers as an act of *iconoclasm* in a Piercian sense we would be describing only part of the act's significance for those involved. We are left in a position whereby, in order to apply Pierce's terms to the act we seek to label, the attack on the busts must be referred to as *icono-indexo-symboloclasm* or *semioclasm*. The only advantage of using such phrases is that they point to the fact that any one sign can function in more than one way at any given moment. While this is an interesting idea, the labels only serve to obscure a key issue.

If we use the label *iconoclasm*, or one of the cumbersome neologisms outlined above, in a semiotic sense (to denote the destruction of a specific kind of sign), we are creating a typology of sign destructions whose organisational criteria are based on how the sign relates to its object in terms of relative resemblance. Yet, the fact that the busts were believed by all involved in the confrontation to be accurate "likenesses" of Necker and d'Orléans was not the reason their physical integrity became so violently contested. If resemblance had been the reason for the attack, then the German guards might just as well have attacked the busts before they left Curtius' shop, or destroyed them in the squares and then retired from the battle to seek other "likenesses" to destroy. What really was at issue was the busts' meanings as signified by their use in an act of protest and by the addition of the black crêpe which actually obscured the level of resemblance. Resemblance was not an important condition for the use of the images by the crowd in the first place; it was the connotations of the busts, in the context of the crowd's knowledge of current affairs, that were important.

³⁵ The logic of this line of argument is similar to Nelson Goodman's assertion that similarity is "too relative, variable and culture-dependent for being of any value as a criterial concept". Cited in Brouissac op cit, p. 197.

It has been shown that the term *iconoclasm* has two potential meanings that are complex, lacking in specificity and difficult to apply accurately to actual historical events. Yet, the word *icon* and, therefore, *iconoclasm* has a third meaning. This third sense is theological and postulates that the *icon* is to be understood as “a sign of the invisible”.³⁶ In other words, it is the exact opposite of the Peircian concept of the *icon* as an image that works through physical resemblance. After all, how could a statue of a saint ever be said to actually physically resemble its prototype? Firstly, many saints did not have portraits made of them during their lifetimes and, as such, any resemblance between the signifier and signified would be both coincidental and unverifiable. Secondly, the significant criteria for distinguishing saints from ordinary people are metaphysical and, logically, impossible to represent in terms of visual likeness by using physical materials. Thus, in semiotic terms, the statue of a saint is a *symbol*. Returning to the potential use of the term *iconoclasm* in its theological sense, one must note that its deployment would not correctly allow it to be applied to the destruction of signs for visible objects. Furthermore, one could not properly apply the term, in this sense, to secular objects. So, how are we to escape this impasse whereby describing the destruction of a statue of a saint as *iconoclasm* can simultaneously imply that the saint could be either an image in the generalised sense, a particular kind of sign which denotes by resemblance and/or a sign for the invisible?

In seeking to overcome this terminological problem, would it be useful to attempt to identify and use the term *iconoclasm* in its eighteenth-century sense? Probably not, dictionaries of the period rarely define the term.³⁷ When its meaning is defined it is in a loaded historical sense which refers only to the breakage of religious images; acts that are described as being sacrilegious and deserving of condemnation.³⁸ For us to use the term in this way would be inappropriate on three counts. Firstly, much of the damage we will

³⁶ Julien Ries (ed.), “L’Expression du sacré dans les grandes religions”, Paris, 1986, vol. 3, p. 13. In the *Encyclopédie*, the discussion of the word *image* notes, “The word *image* is, in a sense, consecrated to holy things or things regarded as such.” Diderot & D’Alembert, “Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers”, Berne and Lausanne, 1782, vol. 18, p. 347.

³⁷ For example, the following dictionaries do not define the word *iconoclasm*: Une Société de Religieux et de Jurisconsultes, “Dictionnaire Ecclésiastique et canonique portatif, ou abrégé méthodique de toutes les connaissances nécessaires aux Ministres de l’Eglise, et utiles aux Fidèles qui veulent s’instruire de toutes les Parties de la Religion”, Paris, 1777. M. Alletz, “Dictionnaire theologique, contenant l’exposition et les preuves de la révélation, de tous les dogmes de la foi et de la morale; les points de controverse, les hérésies les plus célèbres, et les opinions différentes des principaux théologiens scholastique”, Paris, 1767. “Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française. Nouvelle Édition, Augmentée d’un Supplément, où a ajouté les Mots qui ne se trouvent point dans le Dictionnaire de l’Académie”, Nîmes, 1787. L’abbé Féraud, “Dictionnaire critique de la langue Françaises”, Marseilles, 1788.

³⁸ M. Alletz op cit, p. 634.

be considering is to secular objects. Secondly, those who damage or destroy religious art often no longer regard it as being sacred or of religious value; to label the act with a term that connotes sacrilege is potentially to describe only one party's perception of the act. Thirdly, it would be naive to believe that during the eighteenth century an unambiguous consensus existed over the connotations of the word *iconoclasm* anymore so than a consensus exists today – and we have shown that none does. Instead of pursuing a definition, we could perhaps describe ways in which the word *iconoclasm* was used in the eighteenth century. But, the term was rarely deployed during the revolution to denote the kinds of activities we will be considering. More common were terms like “degradations”, “mutilations”, “over-turnings”, “removals” or more specifically descriptive terms such as “cutting”, “slashing” or “breaking”. It is the pejorative connotations of the term *iconoclasm* in the eighteenth century and the fact that it was rarely used that lead me to dismiss pursuing and applying its old meaning in this study.

Gamboni suggests that using the word *iconoclasm* in its metaphorical sense raises fewer difficulties.³⁹ Yet, this approach does not necessarily help us to escape from the problems outlined above, rather it defers them. We are, for example, left asking: “If the breaking of a given image is metaphorical iconoclasm then, the breaking of which other kind of image do we think it is like?” As noted above, Réau rejected the word *iconoclasm* because he did not think that a building was an *icon/image* in the way that a painting, sculpture or a print was. Therefore, he did not believe that “breaking” a building was like breaking the other kinds of objects. One way around this is to say that all of the objects listed as *images* in, for example, the *Petit Robert* are types of representational signs: drawings, effigies, paintings, sculptures etc. One could add that buildings are also signs and, as such, their breakage is like that of other signs; what matters, is not the shape of the object but its function as a sign, as a vehicle for meaning. This would allow one to include in one's analysis other types of sign whose breakage, as I will later argue, is comparable to that of those objects more traditionally privileged in art history. My study will, for example, consider attacks on tricolor cockades, flags, banners, red bonnets, homemade effigies, *affiches*, relics, reliquaries, chalices, crosses, churches' grills, bells and confession boxes.⁴⁰ However, if we use the word *iconoclasm* in a metaphorical sense we

³⁹ Gamboni op cit, p. 19.

⁴⁰ It is worth noting that church silverware (i.e. ciboriums, chalice, crosses, etc) were considered by the antiquarian Aubin-Louis Millin to be related to painting and sculpture because of the role of drawing in the production of each kind of object. Aubin-Louis Millin, “Antiquités nationale, ou recueil de monumens pour servir à l'Histoire générale et particulière de l'Empire français, tels que Tombeaux, Inscriptions, Statues, Vitraux, Fresques, etc. tirés des Abbayes, Monastères, Châteaux, et autres lieux, devenus domaines nationaux”, Paris 1791. p. 2.

are in danger of drawing misleading connections between the breaking of different kinds of objects. For many people in revolutionary France and indeed today, the breaking of a tricolor cockade and an academic sculpture are different because, for a host of complex reasons, the latter belongs to the special category of objects called “art” – its value and appropriate modes of treatment are thought about in particular ways. Also, as this study shows, there is the additional problem that the breaking of a sculpture that was deemed by some to be “bad art” might be considered by them to be different, and less objectionable, to the destruction of a sculpture deemed to be “good art”.⁴¹ Yet, the breakage of the same “bad sculpture” could be thought by other people to be an appalling loss because they valued it differently, for example as a religious object, to a piece of “good art” which had no religious value for them. Furthermore, in October 1794 the Temporary Commission of Arts (TCA) made a point that I will address in the conclusion of chapter 5: “We observe that the degradations that occur most often involve objects of sculpture”.⁴² The fact that the commission even raised this issue serves to show that, for reasons they wished to establish, the breaking of sculpture was different to the breaking of other objects. My point is simply that if one wishes to use the word *iconoclasm* as a metaphor, then one must be careful to account for the specificity of different kinds of attacks on different kinds of objects (whether one calls them *icons*, *images* or *signs*).

This leads us to a second major problem with the label *iconoclasm*, namely that the *clasm* part of the word is problematic on two counts. Firstly, the word requires that other qualifying terms be used in order to distinguish between degrees of breakage. For example, could the smashing to pieces of a sculpture and the grinding up or melting down of its parts be as readily called “icon breaking” as the scratching of a sculpture’s surface or the chipping off of its nose? Secondly, and more importantly, *iconoclasm*’s emphasis on breakage is tied up with notions of erasure and suggests that all acts thus labeled are subtractive. But this thesis will repeatedly show that, in a very important respect, acts traditionally called *iconoclasm* are additive in a non-physical way; they transform and create new meanings for signs. The deployment of the word *iconoclasm* implicitly censors this aspect of the acts that it is used to label and focuses on the *icon* as a physical object that is broken and not as a sign that is transformed. But, as I argue, in the context of *iconoclasm* during the French revolution there is no doubt that most Parisians thought about and treated *icons* as both objects and signs, and the additive value of *iconoclasm* was widely understood by *iconoclasts*, their supporters and often their opponents. To a

⁴¹ Gamboni makes a similar point. Gamboni op cit, p. 20.

⁴² Louis Tuetey, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission Temporaire des Arts”, Paris, 1918, vol. 1, p. 440.

degree, it is this aspect of *iconoclasm* that makes it most interesting as a subject for art historians who want to understand the ways in which objects function as signs and the ways in which people in the past thought about this process. As I hope this thesis will show, the study of *iconoclasm* offers revealing insights into the ways in which people thought about, used and treated representational objects that we might categorise as *images*, *icons*, *signs* or even “*art*”.⁴³

However, in emphasising the importance of *icon breaking* as an act of additive re-signification I do not want to diminish the significance of its subtractive dimension and de-signification of signs; the two clearly go hand in hand. Hence, I am not tempted to replace *iconoclasm* or the alternative *semioclasm* with a neologism such as *semioplasm* that, from the word *plastic*, would signify “the moulding, shaping, modeling, or giving of form” to signs.⁴⁴ Nor do I propose a rash of new words to aid the taxonomical process. As Gamboni notes, “I personally doubt that reducing situations that we shall be dealing with to a kind of logical grammar and coining a phrase for each would be of much help”.⁴⁵ One would have to decide whether new phrases should be developed in terms of the kind of object attacked, the form that attacks upon objects took, or both. Furthermore, one might decide that the kind of person that carried out an attack, as well as their motives, required categorisation. This would lead to a further taxonomical problem, “what criteria do we use to categorise attackers? Class? Gender? Age?” One could easily be left with dozens of new labels that served only to obfuscate rather than clarify the field of study. Instead, I have chosen to continue to use the word *iconoclasm*, having made clear the problems with the label. I hope that the reader will bear these difficulties in mind when I use the problematic word. When *iconoclasm* is used in this study it will be in contexts that emphasise the specificity of different kinds of physical and semiotic de-signification and re-signification of the types of representational objects listed above and the different ways in which they were broken, altered or recontextualised. And, unlike the condemnatory historians of so-called “vandalism”, I will frequently draw attention to the

⁴³ At the end of the previous paragraph I outlined the problems with the use of the term “art” as a category of objects; I prefer “sign” or “representational object”. In the paragraph that this note closes I have explained the difficulties associated with the emphasis on *breaking* in the word *iconoclasm*. By combining these two sets of concerns it is possible to see why I have not chosen to adopt an alternative label, proposed by Gamboni, “the destruction of art”. However, it is important to note that Gamboni recognised the problems associated with his term. That is to say it raises the irresolvable question “What is art?” It also fails to distinguish between damage and destruction, and it underplays the creative element of sign altering. Gamboni op cit, p. 19.

⁴⁴ “The New Oxford Dictionary of English”, Oxford, 1998. I am grateful for Tom Gretton suggesting the provocative term “semioplasm” in an off-the-cuff remark.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 20.

fact that different people valued different kinds of signs in very different ways and, as a result, reacted differently to iconoclastic attacks on them. Any given iconoclastic act might seem like the transgressive alteration of a representational object to one person, but another person might think that failing to treat the object in such a way was transgressive; signs are polysemic and so are acts of iconoclasm. This study seeks to remove value judgements from the treatment of its subject; to show that the pejorative label “vandalism” masks the fact that those who deploy it think differently about the altered objects to those people condemned as “vandals”.

I am not the first historian to reject the term “vandalism” on the grounds outlined above, the label is also dismissed by the authors of most of the currently available articles and major chapters written about iconoclasm during the French revolution.⁴⁶ However, in some important respects this thesis is very different to the available literature. Firstly, despite the fact that I will be referring to iconoclastic attacks on a variety of representational objects, the focus of this study is on sculpture, as in the historical examples used in this chapter. Chapter 3 will deal with the treatment of statues at the Théatins. In chapter 4 the statues of kings in public squares will be my main concern and in chapter 5 the suppression of Catholic sculpture will be discussed in depth. In part, this focus is attributable to my desire to offer a response to the issue raised by the TCA concerning the propensity of iconoclasts to attack such objects. But my decision to focus on sculpture is also to do with the practical limitations of a three-year thesis such as mine. That is to say that one has to narrow the field of research if one is to hope to be able to correlate and report one’s findings. It is partly on these grounds that I have also decided to focus, again not exclusively, on a limited number of spaces in Paris. This is the second factor that distinguishes this thesis from the available literature. My focus-spaces can be categorised both as religious and secular, although such a distinction will be shown to be problematic later in the thesis. The religious spaces include: Notre-Dame de

⁴⁶ I am principally referring to the following texts: Stanley J. Idzerda, ‘Iconoclasm During the French Revolution’, in *American Historical Review*, vol. LX, no. 1, Oct. 1954, pp. 19–20; D. Hermant, ‘Déstructions et Vandalisme pendant la Révolution Française’, in *Annales ESC.*, July–August 1978, pp. 703–719; G. Sprigath, ‘Sur Le Vandalisme Révolutionnaire (1792–1794)’, in *Annales historiques de la révolution française*, 1980, no. 52, pp. 510–535; Emmet Kennedy, ‘A Cultural History of the French Revolution’, Yale, 1989, pp. 197–310; Serge Leroux, ‘Tendances iconoclastes dans la pensée jacobine’, in *Les cahiers scientifique*, no. 72, 1989, pp. 322–342; the published papers of the Colloquium of Clermont-Ferrand ‘Révolution Française et ‘Vandalisme Révolutionnaire’’, Paris, 1992; Richard Wrigley, ‘Breaking the code: interpreting French Revolutionary iconoclasm’ in Alison Yarrington and Kelvin Everest (eds.), *Reflections of Revolution: Images of Romanticism*, London, 1993; Bronislaw Baczko, ‘Ending the Terror: The French Revolution after Robespierre’, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 185–223. There is also an extensive literature available on official preservationist efforts during the revolution. For reasons of space I have not discussed these texts here.

Paris, St. Sulpice, St. Eustache, St. Roch and the church of the Théatins. These spaces were chosen from among the mass of religious buildings in eighteenth-century Paris either because they were major parish churches and, therefore, foci for disputes over religion and politics, or, as in the case of the Théatins, because particularly interesting iconoclastic events took place in or outside them. Other religious spaces will also be considered and we will, for example, focus briefly on the church of Ste. Geneviève in chapter 2.⁴⁷

One can argue that revolutionary iconoclasm targeted three kinds of signs: feudal, religious and royal, all of which were to be found in churches. Examples of each kind of sign were sometimes located in the streets (and we will briefly discuss their treatment), but there was also another major kind of space in which royal signs were found – royal squares. The Place Louis XV, the Place Vendôme, the Place des Victoires, the Place Royale and the Pont-Neuf all had prominently positioned statues of kings within them. Most of chapter 4 is dedicated to discussion of these spaces and objects. In an important respect, the way in which I discuss the treatment of signs in secular and/or religious spaces qualifies as a third difference between this thesis and the available literature. I will repeatedly be drawing attention to the connection between each space's uses and the treatment of signs within it. In chapter 2, I argue that representational objects signify the meanings of spaces but that the uses of spaces serve a similar function. This argument will inform all that follows and I will show that a relationship existed between the changing functions of spaces and the treatment of representational objects within them.

By focusing on a limited number of spaces this thesis can explore and explain the gradual changes in the treatment of imagery in Paris in this period in depth, placing a greater emphasis on shifts in local discourses than previous studies. This constitutes a fourth difference between my work and that of others who have dealt with revolutionary iconoclasm. That is not to say that this study neglects the national discourses that can be seen as relating to iconoclasm and which have been the principal focus of much of the previous scholarship in the field. Rather, I examine the developing role played by the treatment of representational objects in the relationship between local and national discourses or, more specifically, between local, municipal and national government and

⁴⁷ In this study I have looked principally at buildings used by the secular clergy and, with the exception of the Théatins, not their regular colleagues. This is one of the short-comings of the thesis and it is hoped that frequent but brief references to spaces used by *reguliers* compensates for the general weighting of the discussion.

the people they represented. I argue that iconoclasm and/or preservation of images, was an actual and a discursive resource used to mediate power relationships between competing factions and individuals within different levels of governance and/or within the population at large.

Fifthly, this study covers a longer period than almost all of the other studies in the field – Réau's book being the notable exception. Some of the available texts focus mainly on the post-Thermidorian period,⁴⁸ the others tend to begin to develop their main arguments around the events of August 1792, dealing with the years 1793 and 1794 in greatest detail. Given that sweeping iconoclastic legislation was passed in August 1792 and that widespread official iconoclasm accelerated in 1793–1794 this historiographical tendency is hardly surprising. However, as was argued above with reference to Réau's notion of "Jacobin vandalism", the iconoclasm of the Terror does not appear out of an historical vacuum. I seek to show that it is only by understanding the developing role of the treatment of images from the outset of the revolution that one can properly understand the legislation of 1792 and its enforcement and expansion in 1793–1794. This point relates to the sixth respect in which this study differs from those currently available. Considerable emphasis is placed on exploring the ways in which habitual modes of reception, shaped by Catholic attitudes towards images, affected the ways in which certain portions of the population treated representational objects and sought to shape government policy with regard to them. That is not to say that I neglect the recent interest in official preservationist efforts during the revolution – indeed I complement such work with research into unofficial preservations – nor that I neglect secular modes of reception. However, I am eager to show that all official policy on the treatment of representational objects was formed, more or less, in a dialogical discourse with groups of Parisians who did not necessarily value such objects in the same way as the pro-preservationist revolutionaries. To this effect I will, at the end of chapter 3, be challenging Olivier Christin's hypothesis that an autonomised aesthetic discourse on art had become dominant by the end of the eighteenth-century and that the *cultuelle* and political functions of such objects were no longer significant.⁴⁹ Christin's points are persuasive but require serious qualification if they are to be helpful to historians of iconoclasm.

⁴⁸ I am principally referring to the excellent work of Wrigley, Baczko and the published papers from the Clermont-Ferrand colloquium.

⁴⁹ Olivier Christin, "Le May des Orfèvres: Contribution à l'histoire de la genèse du sentiment esthétique", in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 105, December 1994, pp. 75–90.

The final major difference between this study and those that are already available is the breadth of documentary sources I have drawn upon. Given that I am looking in more detail at local discourse than previous writers, it was inevitable that I would consult a greater range of documents. For example, I have found the police archives to be a particularly interesting source of information, along with the records of the sectional assemblies and revolutionary clubs. While much work remains to be done in these archives, my use of these sources has helped me to grasp the wide range of attitudes towards representational objects, their functions, values, destruction, removal, alteration and/or preservation. I also draw upon many relevant pamphlets and books that have not, to my knowledge, been used in this field before. Equally importantly, while I have rarely referred to paintings in this thesis, I have tried to use prints as documents and not just illustrations. I have shown that they reflected and constructed the ways in which iconoclasm was used as a resource for imagining and carrying out the revolution and the ways in which the meanings of specific spaces and representational objects were established. Yet, in this study, like all others with an interest in late eighteenth-century “popular culture”, one must often speculate as to what *le peuple* thought on the basis of what officials reported them as thinking and doing. Nevertheless, I hope that this study will be deemed a useful and original contribution to an increasingly well established field of research.

Chapter 2

Iconoclastic actions and discourses, 1789–1790: an iconoclastic revolution?

2.1. Introduction.

The first part of this chapter (2.2) offers historical examples to support the idea that if one studies the changing uses of spaces in which material signs were found, then one can better understand discourses on their treatment during the French revolution. This chapter provides a context within which the destruction of representational objects will be more fully discussed later in this study. In section 2.3, five principle sets of criteria will be identified as those with which Parisians calculated the value of images. I will introduce the idea that various people and institutions tended to apply these criteria with different weightings. The application of one set of criteria in preference to others had implications for the ways in which imagery was treated and also affected the ways in which people reacted to its treatment. Furthermore, the application of one set of evaluational criteria in preference to the others that were available was affected by and served to affect the broader political positions that people and institutions took. The five sets of evaluational criteria identified in this chapter will serve as analytical tools throughout the rest of this thesis. In this chapter I will focus on the following spaces: Notre-Dame de Paris, St. Roch, St. Eustache, St. Sulpice, its seminary and the chapel of the Théatins. The argument will also make reference to the church of Ste. Geneviève. I will be considering the changing uses of these spaces, the treatment of their Church silver and reactions to this treatment of sacred statues, vases, reliquaries, ciboriums etc.

Section 2.2 opens with discussion of the storming of the Bastille and I will eventually return, in section 2.4, to consider the prison's dismantling. I will also ask whether the early events and discourses of the revolution, and the associated representations of them in images and words, suggest that the French revolution can be described as having been iconoclastic from its outset. I will argue that actual iconoclasm and iconoclastic tendencies in the representation of revolutionary events and discourses, were useful resources for French people and *imagiers* seeking to represent, imagine and/or remember the revolution. To summarise, this chapter shows that, in order to understand the treatment of images during this period, one must consider the use of the spaces in which they were found, the uses of the images themselves and the representations of spaces and

of images within them. This approach is complicated by the fact that spaces and their images, as well as representations of both, are always polysemic; they have the potential to support more than one meaning at any given time in the minds of different individuals (and potentially the same individual). This was notably the case when different people or institutions calculated the value of images in ways that were different to one another. Tension could develop over the privileging of any one meaning of a space or image over others or as a result of the perceived incompatibility between a space's perceived meaning as signified by its use, and its meaning as signified by images within the space.

To some extent my approach draws upon Henri Lefebvre's ideas about "the production of space".¹ But, while Lefebvre sought to bring "together various kinds of space and the modalities of their genesis in a single theory", the aim of this thesis is more modest.² Nevertheless, some of his ideas can be usefully deployed in the context of this study. For example, he wrote that, "an already produced space can be decoded, can be *read*. Such a space implies a process of signification. And even if there is no general code of space, inherent in language or all languages, there may have existed specific codes, established at specific historical periods and varying in their effects. If so, interested 'subjects', as members of a particular society, would have acceded by this means at once to *their* space and to their status as 'subjects' acting within that space and (in the broadest sense of the word) comprehending it".³ Lefebvre uses the term "code" to mean a set of shared assumptions about how one ought to behave in different kinds of spaces and not just how one might go about imagining their meaning and significance on the basis of their use and images within them. This knowledge of the code is, according to Lefebvre, accrued not just by observing the use of a specific space and/or its images, but also by being aware of wider discourses on how spatial practice varies from space to space within a given society. One might gain such knowledge by, for example, reading literature that describes spaces and their uses and users, by being aware of the laws that govern behavior in certain kinds of spaces, or by looking at images that represent the kinds of behavior manifested by people in particular spaces. Typically, images within spaces were used to impose the official meaning of a space on its users and to signify the originally intended modes of behaviour appropriate in the space. I add to Lefebvre's ideas by arguing that people are "coders", the ways in which they use a given space can deviate from officially intended and/or previously established codes, thus re-signifying the

¹ Henri Lefebvre, "The Production of Space", Oxford, 1991.

² Ibid., p.11.

³ Ibid. p. 17.

meaning of the space. When, during the revolution, people began to use certain kinds of spaces in new ways (notably churches) they undermined an established code of social practice for those spaces and, in the process, changed the spaces' meanings as they had been signified by images within them. Indeed, new uses for spaces often involved deploying new imagery to help signify the meaning that new uses gave to a space. When some groups of people wished to maintain the old social practices, meanings and images associated with a space, but others wanted them to be changed, images within the spaces, as signifiers of the spaces' meaning, could become sites for conflict. Thus, this chapter will argue that more than one "code" of spatial practice can exist at any given moment in history and that such a co-existence of "codes" can have serious implications for the treatment of images.

2.2 The re-signification of spaces in Paris and the treatment of imagery

By 1789, the Bastille had long been established, through habit and convention, as a symbol of the arbitrary and despotic nature of royal justice. The destruction of the Bastille had been mooted in the 1780s.⁴ The infamous system of the *lettre de cachet*, used by the king to send any subject he wished to the prison, and the looming presence of the building had both contributed to its status as a symbol with negative connotations. However, even using the loose sense of the term developed above, the storming of the fortress-prison on 14 July 1789 cannot readily be considered to have been an act of iconoclasm. The "icon" or, more correctly in this context, the symbol, was not physically destroyed and it was only slightly damaged. Rather, the taking of the building by an armed force of Parisians permanently altered the "symbolicity" of the Bastille. That is to say, the building ceased to function as a depository for the dwindling number of prisoners sent there by royal command. As a result of this forcible change of function the Bastille lost its unambiguous meaning as a symbol of despotism. Henceforth, when Parisians

⁴ Jacques Godechot, "The Taking of the Bastille", London, 1970, pp. 263–266.

pondered the meaning of the building, habit and convention would require them to remember its old significance as a symbol of despotism and its new significance as a symbol of victorious liberty. The connotational connection of the building-as-a-sign with broader discourses on law, order and reform had been changed. The numerous reports of the event in words and images rapidly disseminated news of the storming of the Bastille, ensuring that the tension between the old and new meanings of the space were familiar to all Parisians.

However, while one cannot comfortably say that the taking of the Bastille was iconoclasm, it ought to be noted that during the course of its storming some representational objects were damaged. Namely, the images of saints, kings and queens above entrances to the prison that faced the Faubourg St. Antoine. In 1790, the antiquarian Louis Millin reproduced engravings of the damage done to the sculptures (figs. 7 & 8).⁵ The damage might not have been deliberate, after all, the revolutionary Parisians engaging the prison guards with muskets and canons had rather more pressing targets to fire upon than the sculptures. On the other hand, it is possible that during or after the storming of the prison, revolutionaries attacked the statues on the gate because they thought it inappropriate that images of saints, kings and queens were physically connected to the outer walls of the detested Bastille. Whether or not the damage was deliberate, the battle for the Bastille left permanent marks on its signifiatory sculptures, physically altering their appearance; the statues came to act as indexical signs of the violent re-signification of the neighbouring prison.

As well as being disseminated by reportage images and words, the new “symbolicity” of the Bastille was also signified by a series of ceremonies held in Parisian churches in the days and weeks following the storming of the prison. The most prompt recourse to the Church’s legitimising ceremonies appears to have occurred in St. Sulpice. There, on the evening of the fall of the Bastille, a *Te Deum* was sung by the local District des Carmes in thanks for the day’s events.⁶ The *Te Deum* was a ceremony so solemn that it was traditionally sung to give thanks for the recovery of the king from illness or a royal victory or birth.⁷ By consenting to leading the service, the clergy of what was then the largest parish in Paris was implicitly agreeing with the local district that the storming of

⁵ Millin op cit, vol. 1., p. 30 & 35.

⁶ Charles Hamel, “Histoire de l’église de Saint-Sulpice”, Paris, 1900, p. 227.

⁷ Roger Chartier, “The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution”, Durham and London, 1991, pp. 127-128.

the prison was an event of comparable importance to the monarch's ability to govern in good health.⁸ Church and revolution were signified as being in accord, an important message given the Third Estate's concern over the First Estate's prevarication in joining the nascent National Assembly when it was formed in Versailles. Usually, *Te Deums* were sung at the request of the monarch.⁹ Hence, it could be argued that, when secular revolutionary Assemblies made the same request, they were signifying the newly asserted sovereignty of the people that they represented.

On 26 August 1789, the District of St. Roch held a similar service to "honour the memory of the brave citizens who courageously sacrificed their lives for the defence of liberty" when storming the Bastille.¹⁰ Another ceremony took place in St. Sulpice on 10 August 1789 when the District des Petits Augustins held a service for the repose of the souls "of the brave citizens who died on 14 July while taking the Bastille". The celebration was important enough to warrant the presence of the mayor, Bailly, and the head of the National Guard, Lafayette. Yet, the ostensible signification of an unproblematic consensus between the local revolutionary administration, the municipal government, the revolutionary citizen-soldiers and the Church was undermined somewhat by one of the orators. A lawyer mounted the pulpit after the service and proceeded to give a speech that he claimed had been prepared by a priest who was too ill to read it himself. The speaker announced that Voltaire had been the principal author of the revolution and, yet, he had been refused a religious funeral by the clergy of St. Sulpice just 12 years earlier. The current *curé*, Pancemont, promptly complained to the District's officers, who quickly condemned the speech.¹¹ This incident is a clear example of a problematic that we will confront again and again in the course of this study. Namely, many Parisians regarded the paradigmatic principles of pro-revolutionaries and pro-Catholics as being mutually compatible, yet, others saw them as being intrinsically opposed. However, given that a large proportion of the city's population was Catholic, those in favour of revolutionary change needed the support of the Church. But, in holding pro-revolutionary ceremonies in churches and aligning themselves with the Church, the secular authorities risked alienating the portion of the population who subscribed to a Rousseauist or Voltarian critique of established religion. On the other hand, orators who made references to the

⁸ One might even say that the *Te Deums* symbolically suggested that the king had been "cured" of despotism by the storming of the Bastille.

⁹ Ibid. Chartier also notes that *Te Deums* were sung only 18 times between 1715–1748.

¹⁰ A. P. P, AA. 81, no. 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

philosophe's ideas risked offending Catholics. Such ceremonies had the potential to divide opinion as well as represent a new consensus.

The meanings of many Church buildings were being re-signified by changes in the uses of churches brought about by celebrating the storming of the Bastille. In the process, the indivisible sovereignty of the king was being publicly challenged. What is more, the re-signification of churches was furthered by their use as meeting rooms by the pro-revolutionary District assemblies. St. Roch, St. Eustache, Notre-Dame and the Théatins all served this secular purpose, while the seminary of St. Sulpice supplied a room for the District des Carmes. Thus, at certain hours of the day, one could visit church to pray or to hear mass and not help but overhear the debating of secular issues that had revolutionary resonances or, sometimes, direct implications for reform of the Church. Inside the churches, the *affiches* published by the Districts, the municipality and the National Assembly were pasted to pillars and doors. For those who objected to the policies of any one of these authorities, or who objected to the secular authorities signifying their power in churches, the *affiches* were offensive. As a result, the *affiches* could, potentially, become targets for attack. For example, in December 1790, two witnesses reported to the local police commissioners that they had seen a young man daub ink crosses over the *affiches* in St. Roch.¹² While de-signifying the objects, the young man was, in effect, also re-signifying the *affiches* that had been re-signifying the church as being under secular rule; he was transforming the *affiches* into religious signs. Furthermore, over the next year and a half, many churches had guardhouses built just outside their doors for their local citizen-soldiers.¹³ Thus, even before entering the church one would face the highly symbolic presence of the National Guard. The context in which Church imagery was seen was changing.

Apart from the Bastille celebrations, a whole host of ceremonies for National Guards also re-signified churches, both through a change in the spaces' normal function and through the uniformed, flag-wielding presence of citizen-soldiers. The most common type of National Guards' ceremony was the blessing of a District's flags. Four of these services were held in St. Sulpice in August 1789,¹⁴ at least one was held in St. Eustache¹⁵ and even the relatively small church of the Théatins, where the District of that name held their

¹² A. P. P., AA. 81, no. 357.

¹³ For example, an early mention of the guard house of St. Eustache. Sigismond Lacroix, "Actes de la Commune de Paris pendant la Révolution", Paris, 1920, series 1, vol. 7, p. 144.

¹⁴ Hamel op cit, p. 224.

¹⁵ Lacroix op cit, series 1, vol. 2, p. 95.

assemblies, hosted a service in February 1790.¹⁶ The cathedral of Notre-Dame played host to many similar ceremonies, including the most spectacular and well attended of all, held on 27 September 1789.¹⁷ On this occasion, Abbé Fauchet, from the community of St. Roch, gave a speech and blessed all the flags of the Parisian National Guard before leading a *Te Deum*. There is a definite possibility that accidental iconoclasm resulted from a spectacular volley of muskets that the soldiers fired inside the cathedral before the ceremony began and in the next chapter we will discuss reports of such problems during a different ceremony.¹⁸ A print of this event shows how unambiguous the syncretism of revolutionary and Catholic symbolism really was (fig. 9). The guards, their muskets discharging, stand in all their martial finery with their flags beneath the famous *Mays* series of paintings that lined the nave. This print served to further disseminate the new significance of churches as revolutionary spaces to an audience who might not have witnessed such ceremonies directly.

The symbolism of these ceremonies was that of traditional Catholicism: *Te Deums*, benedictions, consecrations, transferals of flags to the treasury, etc. Priests presided side-by-side with the representatives of local revolutionary government. Surrounding the tri-coloured uniforms of the guards and their flags were the accoutrements of established religion, its enrobed clergy, its silverware, its paintings, its statues, confession boxes and its architecture. The ceremonies invited the audience to regard the guards' own symbols as having been made sacred by the clergy but the clergy, the churches and their symbols were also being made revolutionary. Like the Bastille ceremonies, those held for the National Guard could also be uncomfortable for people who felt primary loyalty to the paradigms of revolution *or* Catholicism, or who were uneasy about the effects of one upon the other. For example, a blessing of flags was carried out in St. Eustache on 26 September 1789 for the District of St. Jacques-de-l'Hôpital. The orator drew attention to the significance of the singing of a *Te Deum*, saying it was a "holy and sublime" song that had "been conserved from generation to generation as a religious monument of public recognition", serving to "sanctify triumph".¹⁹ Yet, this seemingly unambiguously

¹⁶ La Croix op cit, series 1, vol. 2, p. 62.

¹⁷ This was symbolic timing because the ceremony fell during Michaelmas and was, therefore, associated with a the martial archangel Michael.

¹⁸ Ibid. pp. 89–91. On 26 January 1790, the National Guards from Philippe-de-Roule transferred their flags to Notre-Dame. Four days later the flags of the Montmartre guards also arrived and, on 17 July, Bailly requested that Lafayette be present for the arrival of the Bazoche's flags. Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 2., Doc. 4270.

¹⁹ Anon, "Discours Prononcé dans l'Eglise de Saint-Eustache, le Samedi 26 Septembre 1789, à la Bénédiction des Drapeaux du Bataillon de St. Jacques-de-l'Hôpital", Paris, 1789, p. 4.

Catholic sentiment was followed by a less theologically correct appeal to the audience: "So, celebrate, my fellow citizens, the return of this happy and precious Liberty. If the homage which we are duty bound to pay uniquely to the Supreme Being does not permit us to build a temple to liberty within our walls, then we do better, we all raise an Altar in our hearts, we place it beside the Altars to Religion and Justice; we offer to it the reasonable and measured honour that it is due and trace its august name on our standards".²⁰ This statement acknowledged the doctrine of "relative honour", one to which we will return below in reference to Catholic attitudes towards images, but made the novel suggestion that "relative honour" be paid to a secular political paradigm via the imagined secular symbol of an altar to liberty. Furthermore, the suggestion that altars to liberty be raised in the hearts of the members of the audience stemmed from the observation that Catholic teaching would not allow for actual altars to be raised in the church. The implication appears to be that the spatial co-existence of Catholic and revolutionary signifiers during the ceremony ought to have had a more concrete and permanent form, but "duty" to Catholicism would not allow it. Although many Parisians might have shared these sentiments, many Catholics found them disrespectful.

Occasionally, members of the Catholic clergy resisted new uses of churches and/or the secular authorities' interference in the form of traditional Catholic ceremonies. For example, in March 1790, the *curé* of St. Roch, Marduel, refused to open the doors of the church to allow the funeral procession for a Swiss Guard to process to the cemetery. The priest said he would "rather be hanged from the lantern" than open the doors in a way that only usually occurred at Easter.²¹ M. Imbert, of the Feuillants' battalion of National Guards, who had assisted in the service with a detachment of his troops, opened the door himself and obliged the clergy to take the body to the cemetery.²² Churches had thus become not only sites for the signification of consensus between the authorities (signified with words, actions and symbols), but also sites of confrontation (signified with words and actions, the two sides equipped with their own symbols). By the end of 1790, conflict between the secular and religious authorities was mounting, partly for reasons that we will outline when we come to discuss the nationalisation of the Church and the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in section 2.3. These tensions manifested themselves following the Christmas mass in St. Sulpice, for which the Section du Luxembourg (*ci-devant* District des Carmes) had requested the blessing of the bread in their name. The

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 13–14.

²¹ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 2, Doc. 1085.

²² *Chronique de Paris*, number of 6 March 1790, p. 257.

aim, no doubt, was to attempt to reduce concern in the parish caused by the king's imminent verdict on the Constitution of the Clergy by demonstrating the on-going links between the civil authorities and the Catholic churchmen. However, in contravention of a law of 19 June 1790, incense was symbolically burned during the ceremony, not in honour of God but for three bishops and a cardinal who were sitting in the stalls around the choir.²³ A mass intended to underline the commonality of secular and religious authority had served only to symbolically highlight their diverging agendas. To the revolutionaries of the Luxembourg committee, the burning of incense in honour of an individual was a sign of privilege and rank, an affront to equality as well as to the nation's law. It was in these terms that they presented the matter to the Municipal Council on 4 January.²⁴

Catholicism had an important role to play in disseminating and legitimising the revolution. From the very moment of the fall of the Bastille, recourse to Catholic traditions had been the immediate response of the revolutionary Parisian authorities and portions of the population that were eager to show their joy at the turning of events. Yet, the use of Church ceremonies, personnel and spaces for revolutionary ends presented problems for secular and religious authorities, as well as for those who subscribed to one of the multitude of shades of opinion that the authorities sought to represent. Catholic representational objects acted as a resource for both the authorities and the people they represented when they wished to publicly signify their attitudes to the revolution and to one another. Dean MacCannell has written that, "Bakhtin taught us, and his point is essential to any ethnosemiotic study, that signs, whether they are found in works of art or everyday discourse, mediate historically real social relations and these relations are typically not between social equals".²⁵ Traditionally, Catholic ceremonies with religious images at their heart were instigated and organised by the secular and religious authorities of Paris, and not by its population, to mark important events. For example, Steve Kaplan has argued persuasively that during the *ancien régime* the relics of Paris' patron saint, Ste. Geneviève, were particularly useful to the authorities when they needed to maintain social control in times of particular collective crisis – namely, when poor weather led to problems provisioning the city.²⁶ When all the options for supplying food to Paris had been exhausted then the relics would be uncovered and the saint would be asked to

²³ La Croix op cit, Paris, 1896, series 2, vol. 2, p.16s.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Dean MacCannell, "Sights and Spectacles", in Brouissac op cit, p. 425.

²⁶ Steve L. Kaplan, "Religion, Subsistence and Social Control: The Uses of Sainte Geneviève", *Eighteenth-Century Studies XVIII*, Winter 1979/1980, pp. 142–168.

intercede. In effect, if the plea were unsuccessful then the fault for the worsening crisis was partly shifted from the authorities onto the city's patron saint. Thus, it can be said that the church of Ste. Geneviève, the relics of the saint and the imagery surrounding them were used by the authorities to mediate "historically real social relations" with the population of the starving city. It could be argued that all of the new revolutionary ceremonies that we have so far discussed were also organised by the authorities and, as such, also used religious signs to mediate relations with Parisians.

However, some of the novel revolutionary ceremonies in churches had a distinctly "popular" dimension whereby unofficial groups used Catholic spaces and signs to mediate relations with the secular and religious authorities. For example, throughout July and August 1789, groups of women from the markets in Paris processed to Ste. Geneviève to leave floral tributes²⁷ and/or "magnificent pendants"²⁸ in thanks to the saint for supposed intercessionary involvement in the fall of the Bastille; these were, in effect, revolutionary ex-votos.²⁹ Often the processions included National Guards from the women's districts and took the traditional form of processions held during Catholic festivals, stopping at several stations *en route*. Occasionally the cathedral of Notre-Dame was one such station where thanks would be given to the patron saint of France, the Virgin Mary.³⁰ Frequently, the Hôtel de Ville would constitute a station where the march would pause while Lafayette was thanked for his patriotism.³¹ As these processions wound their way through the streets of Paris, with their devotional gifts and uniformed guardsmen, they publicly declared loyalty to both religious and revolutionary paradigms. But at the heart of all of the ceremonies was thanks for a victory secured by the people of Paris themselves, largely unmediated by the authorities. The ceremonies and the imagery deployed were used to make this point clear to Parisians and those who represented them.

²⁷ Such a tribute was left on 18 July 1789. L'abbé Edouard Pinet, "La compagnie des porteurs de la Chasse de Sainte-Geneviève 1525-1902", Paris, 1902, pp. 262-263. Another floral tribute was left on 29 July. Ibid., pp. 263-264. A third such tribute was left at the start of August, it was decorated with ribbons that were, quite possibly, red, white and blue – the revolutionary tricolor. Ibid. p. 265. On 3 August, a group of women also left a floral tribute and then gave a revolutionary cockade to one of the church's priests to wear, thus signifying his support for the revolution. Ibid., pp. 266-267

²⁸ Such a gift was left on 18 August 1789. Anon, "Procession solennelle Des Dames Frippieres de la Halle & des Marchands du Cimetière des Innocents; Suivie du Compliment à M. de la Fayette. Le Mardi 18 Août 1789", Paris, 1789

²⁹ It is interesting that it was market women who led these celebrations. They obviously had a special interest in the provisioning of Paris, as noted above, this was an issue closely related with Ste. Geneviève. The women might have thought that the saint had not interceded to prevent the dearth that led to the high price of bread because the revolution was divinely ordained and hunger fueled the mobilisation of Parisians against the royal authorities, as symbolised by the Bastille's fall.

³⁰ As during the procession held on 18 August.

³¹ As during the processions held at the start of August and again on 18 August.

Sometimes the delegations of women asked that a *Te Deum* be sung in gratitude for the events of 14 July. As a member of the church's clergy remarked, this solemn service had never been performed before on the request of private groups.³² This note implicitly recognised that it had, until then, been the authorities that had instigated the deployment of traditional Catholic ceremonies to mark significant events. The market women were asserting the sovereignty of *le peuple* by claiming the right to instigate such ceremonies as well as processions that transgressed the traditional calendar of religious festivals. The material religious signs of the relics, the reliquary, the flowers, the pendants and all the surrounding imagery (both Catholic and revolutionary) were being used by the market women to mediate the relations between them, the secular and religious authorities and important events. The key point here is that material signs can mediate social relations, but this process of mediation worked in both directions between rulers and ruled at this point in the revolution.³³

However, it was sometimes the Districts, rather than private groups, that instigated ceremonies focusing on Ste. Geneviève and deployed Catholic and revolutionary representational objects side-by-side. For example, the flags of the District du Saint-Etienne-du-Mont were blessed on 22 September 1789 and a mass had to be held in its parish church by the clergy of Ste. Geneviève because there was insufficient room in the saint's chapel in Ste. Geneviève itself. A procession was then held through the quarter's main streets accompanied by musicians (possibly from the militia) and carrying a "gilded wooden statue" of their patron saint.³⁴ Nor was this the only pro-revolutionary procession to take to the streets with a Catholic statue. At the beginning of September 1789, the District des Carmes took the silver statue of the Virgin Mary from St. Sulpice. Accompanied by the parish clergy they marched to Ste. Geneviève to give thanks for the fall of the Bastille. They left the statue in the church before heading to the town hall to thank Lafayette for his patriotism and, finally, they returned to collect their statue and processed back to St. Sulpice via the Luxembourg gardens.³⁵ Such uses of Catholic images served to legitimise the authority of the district assemblies and also helped allay the growing fears that some Catholics had regarding the intentions of the secular authorities towards the Church.

³² Pintet op cit, pp. 263–264.

³³ The municipality of Paris was eager to demonstrate its support for the phenomenal popular recourse to the city's patron saint and, perhaps, to assimilate the cult back into official discourse. On 3 January 1790 (Ste. Geneviève's festival) Bailly and Lafayette came to pay homage to her. Bailly declared that the municipality's custom of the paying homage to her each year was to be maintained. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 268–269.

³⁵ Charles Hamel op cit.



Catholics certainly had cause for concern over the relationship between the reforming secular authorities and the Church in 1789–1790. During the debates of 13 April 1790, the Constituent Assembly had voted against a motion to confirm Catholicism as being the state religion.³⁶ As a pamphlet printed in April of 1790 pointed out, one religion could not be privileged in this way without implicitly compromising the liberty of the cults outlined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man.³⁷ Equally, while the secular authorities instigated many of the novel religious ceremonies that came into being following the fall of the Bastille, they also took steps to abolish other Catholic festivals. The annual procession to the reputedly miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary on the rue aux Ours was outlawed in 1789.³⁸ Then, on 9 June 1790, the Constituent Assembly's Commission of Begging suggested that the legislature cut the number of Catholic festivals observed in Paris from 24 to four. They argued that the 21 lost festivals all had traditionally led to "quarrels, debauchery and drunkenness", arguing that they could be moved to Sundays if necessary. It was suggested that only Corpus Christi (Fête Dieu), the Ascension, All Saints and Christmas were to survive as public holidays.³⁹ It might have been a consolation to Catholics that the Fête Dieu was to remain untouched. This was the occasion when "the streets [were] ornamented as were the Temples" with "beautiful tapestries, as well as the most precious paintings"⁴⁰ and images of saints were carried to excite Parisians "to imitate them, and to avail of their protection".⁴¹ But the official rejection of Catholicism as the state religion meant that many non-Catholic Parisians no longer felt obliged to follow the *ancien régime* rules governing behaviour during the *fête dieu*. This led to trouble, for example, in the parish of St. Roch when the district insisted that people decorate their houses as usual.⁴² In coming years, confrontations would be common between non-Catholics who refused to remove their hats as the procession passed by and Catholics who found this lack of respect for sacred and/or saintly representational objects offensive. One inevitable result of the policy to cut-back the

³⁶ Adolphe Schmidt, "Paris pendant la Révolution, d'après les rapports de la police secrète 1789–1800", Paris, 1894, vol. 4, p. 6.

³⁷ Anon, "Réponse à la déclaration d'une partie de l'Assemblée Nationale, publiée avant-hier, ou Adresse d'un bon Chrétien à cette Section de l'Assemblée Nationale, réunie en l'Eglise des Capucins, dans le cours d'Avril 1790", Paris, 1790.

³⁸ René Héron de Villefosse, "Pèlerinages Parisiens", Paris, 1947, p. 190.

³⁹ Camille Bloch & Alexandre Tuetey, "Procès-verbaux et rapports du Comité de Mendacité de la Constituante 1790–1791", Paris, 1912, p. 66.

⁴⁰ R. P. Nicholas Collin [Doctor of Theology], "Traité des Processions de l'Eglise Catholique", Paris, 1779, p. 186.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 135.

⁴² A. P. P., AA. 81 No. 163.

number of festivals, unless they could be moved to Sundays, was the diminution of the number of occasions on which Catholic imagery filled the streets of the city, signifying them as religious spaces.

However, for many Catholics the legislature's vote in favour of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy on 12 July 1790, had much more serious implications for the Church than reform of the festivals or even the refusal to recognise Catholicism as the state religion. The new measures meant that priests were to become civil servants; they were obliged to swear that their primary allegiance was to the National Assembly and, by implication, not to the Pope. Furthermore, laymen, including Jews and Protestants would henceforth be included among the voters in the newly formed electoral colleges that were charged with the election of parish priests and bishops. If the king chose not to apply his veto then the people and not Bishops would control the Catholic Church and it would be separated from the power of the Pope. One could argue that one of the intended functions of the Fête de la Fédération, held on the Champ de Mars on 14 July, was to signify that revolutionary reform of the Church was not a rejection of Catholicism. This was a festival in honour of the supposed revolutionary consensus between, king, Church and nation, held in the presence of Catholic clergy, side-by-side with thousands of National Guards, the king and the representatives of the legislature all of whose clothes and symbols signified their unity. However, the festival offered a mere illusion of universal consensus. The clergy and their supporters were far from content with the revolutionary authorities' treatment of the Church.

The reaction of the pupils and head of the seminary of St. Sulpice to the Fête de la Fédération reveals the tension that the legislature's measures had provoked. A few days before the celebrations, the students were called on by the Revolutionary Committee of the Section du Luxembourg to assist with the building of the huge festival site on the Champs de Mars. The head of the school, Emery, saw little option but to accept this responsibility, despite his profound distaste for a festival that was to celebrate a consensus that he felt threatened his deeply held religious convictions. He, his students and the parish priests were all strongly opposed to the new Civil Constitution and to the fact that mendicant and contemplative religious orders had been legally suppressed on 13 February. But compromise was necessary and, in a symbolic move, he and his students, dressed in their robes, marched to the Champs de Mars in alternate ranks with the uniformed *Fédérés* soldiers who had come to Paris for the celebrations and had been billeted in the college buildings. Behind the procession came the carriage of the *cure* of

St. Sulpice, Pancemont, with a bucket and spade visible through the window, denoting his willingness to work.⁴³ The clerics intended to placate the fervently enthusiastic mass of revolutionary supporters assisting in the preparations by presenting a symbolic facade of unity. However, during the festivities themselves, the seminarists simply left Paris, censuring their own symbolic involvement in the event.⁴⁴ Pancemont, as the *curé* of Paris' largest parish, was less easily excused. He was left with little choice but to swear a kind of proto-Civil Constitutional oath of loyalty to the nation, the king, the law and the constitution.⁴⁵ Behind the festival's oratory and visual symbolism of the unity of the Church, royalty and the legislature, lay barely concealed divisions. All of the most senior figures of civil and ecclesiastical authority were present, but all had different expectations of the key figure, the king. As "Defender of the Faith", would the king veto the Civil Constitution of the Clergy or would he simply accept the legislature's vote? In the subsequent weeks, the clergy petitioned him to wait for the Pope to declare his views on the matter but, to their bitter disappointment, the king promulgated the decree on 24 August, ignorant of the pontiff's opinions.⁴⁶ At so many of the new revolutionary festivals secular and Catholic representational objects were being deployed side-by-side in order to signify a new consensus and to signify religious space as revolutionary and visa versa. But the reality of divided opinions was hidden by the revolutionary appropriation of Catholic imagery. In the context of the reforms of the Church, the fate of the Catholic representational objects themselves was far from secure and was becoming a further focus for divisive debate.

Novel revolutionary festivals altered the context in which Catholic and revolutionary imagery was seen in the churches and on the streets of Paris. These sets of imagery were being recruited to serve new functions as signifiers of the relationship between the secular and religious authorities and the people the authorities claimed to represent. The objects were used to mediate new relations between these groups and to complement the new meanings that religious spaces were signified as having by virtue of their new uses. As such, the meanings available to people thinking about the objects in question had changed. Furthermore, it has been shown that the possible interpretations of the objects' meaning and significance, available to the users and viewers of them, was partly contingent upon wider discourses on issues relating to the relationship between secular

⁴³ Jean-Auguste Gosselin, "Vie de M. Emery, neuvième supérieur du séminaire et de la Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice", Paris, 1861, p.228.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.264.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.268.

⁴⁶ John McManners "The French Revolution and the Church" op cit, p. 44.

and religious powers. For example, one's view on the question of state religion or the Civil Constitution of the Clergy would influence one's interpretation of the significance of the presence of revolutionary as well as Catholic imagery on view during the Fête Dieu celebrations or during the Fête de la Fédération. If historians try to understand the treatment of Catholic images in the context of discursive and signficatory shifts, then they can better explain later iconoclastic attacks. However, it is only now that we will go on to discuss perhaps the most controversial strand of discourse relating to the relationship between the secular and religious authorities in 1789–1790: the nationalisation of Church property. The policy of nationalisation altered the discursive context within which the value and significance of Catholic imagery was evaluated by Parisians of this period and it had direct implications for the physical integrity of such objects.

2.3. The value of images: the first wave of official iconoclasm

Since 4 August 1789, following a motion by Abbé Jessé, the National Assembly had been discussing the nationalisation of Church property as a way for France to fund its escape from financial ruin.⁴⁷ The plan included the closing down of what were regarded to be uneconomical communities of contemplative and charitable religious orders. This move proved highly unpopular in some quarters. One pamphlet, dated 1790, declared, "It is a notable fact that all our churches, be they parishional or conventual are full of the Faithful on festivals and Sundays throughout the year; so, how can parish churches alone be capable of containing the crowds from all the other churches".⁴⁸ The goods, as well as the buildings, of such communities were to be sold for the profit of the nation. In late September, during a debate in the National Assembly on the subject of the nation's finances, Necker had called on citizens to follow the example of the king, and bring jewellery to *la monnaie* as "patriotic gifts". Jessé responded by saying that the "*richesses mortes*" of all churches should also be collected. Le Clerc de Juigné, the Archbishop of

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.9.

⁴⁸ Modeste Laugier, "Le dénonciateur du paganisme renaissant, ou adresse aux Assemblées des Districts; pour demander qu'on érige en Paroisses les Eglises des Religieux", Paris, 1790 (6th March).

Paris, rose to his feet and suggested that all silver the Church did not need for the maintenance of “decent worship” ought to be handed over to the nation to be melted down to make coins.⁴⁹ By intervening in the debate in this way, the archbishop was perhaps hoping that his clergy would maintain a degree of control over which silver objects were to be surrendered. He also, no doubt, hoped to show that the Church supported the revolution.

On 29 September 1789, a law was passed that was based on these debates. Some of the surrendered silver from Parisian churches was to constitute a simple “patriotic gift”. But, in addition, some churches chose to surrender silver in lieu of cash contributions for an enforced six-month loan to the nation.⁵⁰ St. Roch, for example, took to the mint, “a large amount of silver as designated in the deliberations of the *curé* and the churchwardens on 4 October 1789.”⁵¹ The general assembly of the district of St. Roch, the *curé* and the wardens all agreed to send another batch of gold and silver to the mint as an additional “patriotic gift”.⁵² The new laws, their enforcement and responses to them are interesting on two counts. Firstly, they are highly revealing of the ways in which different people and administrative bodies calculated the value of Catholic imagery. Secondly, they show how imagery played a role in broader disputes. The behaviour of the clergy of St. Sulpice clearly exemplifies these points.

Following the discussions of St. Sulpice’s *fabrique* on 26 September 1789, it was decided to send all the silver vases they could give without compromising decent worship to *la monnaie* to be melted down as a “patriotic gift”.⁵³ Thus, their donation was offered voluntarily just days before it would become obligatory under the National Assembly’s law. It is possible that the well-connected churchmen of the parish knew that the debates were moving in the direction of a legal ruling and, by pre-empting it, they sought publicly to signify their good revolutionary credentials. St. Sulpice’s clergy might also have hoped that an early gift would improve the chances of their *curé*, Pancemont, achieving a trade-off that he was planning to propose. He wrote to the Controller of Finances,

⁴⁹ La Croix op cit, series 1, vol. 2, p. 264–265.

⁵⁰ Anon, “Tarif pour l’évaluation des Vaiselles et Bijoux d’Or, portés aux Hôtels des Monnoies [sic] rédigé après les prix fixés par le décret de l’Assemblée Nationale du 6 Octobre 1789, & la proclamation du Roi”, November 1789, A. P. P., AA. 81, no. 51.

⁵¹ This information was given by the church warden to commissioners of the Section du Butte-des-Moulins on 21 August 1792. They surrendered 11, 374 livres, 19 sols, 10 deniers, all of which the government subsequently reimbursed. N. A. F., 2667, no. 121.

⁵² L’abbé Lebeuf [H. Cocheris], “Histoire de la ville et tout le diocèse de Paris”, Paris, 1754, vol. 1, p. 292.

⁵³ Hamel op cit, p. 221.

Necker, to request that the silver statue of the Virgin Mary, which had been processed through Paris earlier in the month, be exempt from the new utilitarian law. On 11 October, Necker replied, "The *fabrique* can conserve this superb statue, an object of special devotion to the parishioners of St. Sulpice."⁵⁴ One can argue that Necker's recognition that the statue was "superb" was rather ambiguous praise because in French the word "superbe" has strong connotations of pride and magnificence. Perhaps the protestant Necker was implying his personal discomfort with the role that such images played in Catholic worship.

Nevertheless, the exchange of letters between Pancemont and Necker is indicative of four of the five key sets of criteria that I have identified as having been used to calculate the value of religious art at this time. Firstly, the surrender of the silver Virgin was necessary because it had come to have political value. That is to say, the destruction or preservation of such objects was supported or objected to by people on political grounds. Secondly, the fate of the statue was uncertain because the new legislation was concerned with the material value of the Catholic silver. By "material value", I mean the value that an object had because it, or its material in another form, could be exchanged for other goods or services. Thirdly, silver objects could have aesthetic value. That is to say, they could elicit a pleasing aesthetic response that was considered to be valuable in its own right. Fourthly, the law's concept of "decent worship" related to the religious value of silver. It was partly on these grounds that the silver Virgin was recognised by the revolutionary authorities as an object of "special devotion", escaping the crucible. However, the latter two of these three sets of criteria are remarkably difficult to measure, their evaluation is based on subjective and qualitative judgements. Ultimately, it was the secular authorities that had the right to judge whether or not an object's material value to the state was outweighed by its religious or aesthetic value. Thus, the future of the silver statue was only assured when Necker declared it to be aesthetically "superb" and religiously "special". Yet, this judgement was not necessarily universally shared. In 1762 Caylus' text about the statue's designer, Bouchardon, had begged to differ. He wrote that Bouchardon had made the model, "But the *curé*, who was good in his own affairs and very bad with regard to the arts, had the work carried out by a silversmith of very little intelligence, but who could complete the enterprise at the lowest price. The figure conserved nothing but a general idea of its initial beauty".⁵⁵ The job of the silversmith cannot have been made

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 230.

⁵⁵ Caylus, "Eloge Historique d'Edme Bouchardon, Sculpteur du Roi. Lu à l'Académie de Peinture le 4 Septembre 1762", Paris, 1762, pp. 46-47.

easier by the materials he was obliged to work with. The *curé* had sourced the silver from his parishioners, receiving individual pieces each time he dined with a group who could afford to contribute.⁵⁶ As we shall soon see, the inherent ambiguities of judging aesthetic value were still important issues during the revolution and were to become extremely problematic.

Nor was the calculation of religious value easy to measure, leading all too easily into theological debates among Catholics. For example, a pamphlet written in 1789 pronounced that, “in times of distress the gold and silver that you [the clergy] have received for the divine cult, the ornaments and decorations of your churches” ought to be given to the poor.⁵⁷ The argument was clear, the Church’s “patriotic gifts” and enforced loans ought to be regarded as a fulfillment of their charitable Christian duty. To emphasise the point, the author wrote, “Jesus Christ never said ...You have consecrated to me beautiful vases of gold or silver, you have prepared the walls of my Temples with magnificent ornaments, and so you will be saved. But he did say that I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was hungry and you fed me; I was naked and you clothed me.”⁵⁸ The pamphlet argued that this was a time when the need of the people was especially pressing, “Are vain ornaments well-suited to these calamitous times, when poverty is naked and all the faithful suffer and languish in fear of general misery?”⁵⁹ The author, writing in a self-declared state of religious “fervor”, adopted the voice of the Virgin Mary, declaring, “I particularly exhort the *Fabrique* of the church of St. Sulpice in the good town of Paris, to remember the statue of silver that has been consecrated to me [...] I exhort them in my name and the name of my well-loved son, Jesus Christ, to confirm to the wish of the Very Christian King [Louis XVI, who had promulgated the law] by consecrating to the needs of his kingdom this statue which does not belong to them but to the Faithful. As for the devotion which is due from them, I assure them that this act of justice and charity could not be more agreeable to me as well as to my well-loved son; I do not have a preference for my vain image, it has only brought the accusation of idolatry to fall upon me and my most dear son Jesus Christ.”⁶⁰ The author was casting doubt upon the silver Virgin’s status as an “object of special devotion”, arguing that its religious value was, in the current circumstances, best equated with its material value and potential

⁵⁶ Hence the statue’s familiar name: Notre-Dame de Vieille-Vaisselle.

⁵⁷ Madame de ***, “Lettre de la Très-Sainte Vierge Marie, Mère de Dieu, à tous les Curés et Fabriques des Paroisses du Royaume de France”, Paris, 1789, p.1.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 5–6.

charitable uses. The question of the statue being an idol was also raised and we will return to the issue of idolatry in the next chapter. The pamphlet in question might have been using Catholic language and ideas to criticise the Church but it did so persuasively, showing that it was a matter of theological opinion as to whether the Church's primary duty lay with respecting devotional objects' physical integrity or surrendering them to be destroyed for "charity". In effect, the author of the pamphlet, along with those who shared its opinions, appears to have been a pro-Catholic iconoclast.

However, many Catholics seriously objected to the nationalisation of Church property and the resulting melting down of sacred silver. For example, Abbé Meunier, *curé* of Pont-Sainte-Maxence, was the subject of a citizen's arrest in the Palais Royal in May 1790, when, armed with a *canne à l'épée* and two pistols, he appealed to the public to unite, and demand the conservation of the goods of the clergy.⁶¹ Similar anger against nationalisation was attributed to the conservative courtier Abbé Maury in a pamphlet published around Christmas of 1790. In what is probably a fictitious dialogue with the renowned pro-revolutionary priest Fauchet, Maury said, "[...] he invokes the need of the public to empty the churches. So, does he ignore religious teachings? Saint Éloi said to Dagobert: 'My prince, give me the land of Solignac, so that I can build a chapel by which you and I will mount to heaven'. Such was the sacred goal of the gifts made to monasteries, however, they destroy them".⁶² Depending on one's interpretation of Christian history, one could be for or against nationalisation and still regard oneself as being a genuine Catholic. Accordingly, one could interpret the meaning of churches and their contents differently to those with different religious or political beliefs. Nationalisation and the treatment of silver had divided Catholics among themselves and turned some of them against the revolution. Those Catholics who opposed the new policies became suspected of harbouring counter-revolutionary sympathies.

Nor was opposition limited to individuals. For example, in early 1790, the Chapter of Notre-Dame issued a pamphlet that bitterly contested the loss of the Church's influence over its property.⁶³ Inserted into a longer publication, purporting to be written by three clerics sitting as representatives in the National Assembly, the pamphlet caused a serious confrontation with the secular authorities. Bois, reporting to a meeting of the Paris

⁶¹ Tuetety op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 2, Doc. 1111. One of the arresting citizens was Palloy who co-ordinated the dismantling of the Bastille.

⁶² Anon, "Petit Carême de l'abbé Maury, ou sermons prêchés dans l'Assemblée des enragés. Sermon de controverse pour le jour de la mi-carême 1790, entre l'abbé Maury et l'abbé Fauchet", Paris, 1790, p. 2.

⁶³ Anon, "Extrait du registre des Conclusions du Chapitre de Paris", Paris, 1790.

Commune's Tribunal of Police on 5 May 1790, declared the Chapter's publication to be "born from the delirium of self-interest" and compared it to the abuse of Episcopal powers in the twelfth century.⁶⁴ Gone was the tone of consensual unity apparent in the public ceremonies previously orchestrated in the cathedral with the help of Catholics. Bois was furious at what he saw as the Chapter's attempt to mobilise opposition to the Assembly's attack on the Church's privileges, saying that they were seeking to "agitate consciences" and "arm fanaticism" by using "maxims that are destructive of social harmony" written with "criminal intent".⁶⁵ The tribunal took a similarly dim view of the matter, and suppressed the pamphlet on the grounds that it "inspires in the people false alarm over the maintenance and conservation of the Catholic religion".⁶⁶ An argument that was ostensibly related to Church control over what it deemed to be its own sacred property had brought to a head a more deep-rooted conflict over the rightful exercise of influential authority. The secular authorities, as the owners of a nationalised Church, saw themselves as the guardians of a public morality which valued public peace, order and the maintenance of a myth of consensus more than it valued the right of churchmen to publicise challenges to the secular authorities' decisions. The secular authorities wanted the public to regard them as guardians of a reformed but legitimate Catholicism. Allowing the Chapter of the capital's cathedral to challenge secular power was a potentially dangerous precedent. One begins to see how uneasy the combination of Catholic and revolutionary imagery must have appeared to many Parisians who attended festivals celebrating a supposed consensus.

Not all Parisians shared an interest in the religious value of Church silver. Incidents that occurred in St. Roch and St. Eustache in 1790 serve to illustrate this point well. On 31 May 1790, Marduel, the *curé* of St. Roch, made a declaration to the district's police committee. He reported that the church had been broken into and some of its sacred vases had been stolen.⁶⁷ A fortnight later, on 14 June 1790, the *curé* of St. Eustache, Poupart, reported a similar theft to the district's police.⁶⁸ Along with the silverware that was illegally taken, both thefts involved the loss of the Holy Host and the ciborium that held them within the tabernacle. Those responsible for the removal of goods from St. Eustache emptied the ciborium into a gutter near the Théâtre des Variétés in the Palais Royal, from

⁶⁴ La Croix op cit, series 1, vol. 5, p.313.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.313.

⁶⁷ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol.3, Doc. 3922.

⁶⁸ Ibid., Doc. 3775.

whence they were returned to the church's clergy on 15 June.⁶⁹ The Host from St. Roch was found in "a pile of filth" by "a young rag-picker" in the passage beside the church the day after the burglary.⁷⁰ Thus, the thieves had committed a sacrilegious crime and profaned the most holy material found in any church, the Host.⁷¹ As a result, the clergy had to say prayers and make honourable amends, after which ceremonies of purification were held.⁷²

Although the perpetrators of the crime in St. Roch do not appear to have been found, the St. Eustache thieves were caught. The same commissioner who located the church's profaned Host, took two men in for questioning on the day of the crime.⁷³ One of the men, Boudot, a painter of miniatures, was subsequently released. But Cauvelet, a women's hairdresser, was condemned to be hanged for his part in the "theft" and "profanation".⁷⁴ To some extent, Cauvelet was lucky to face such an end. Certainly, legal precedents existed for far more severe punishments. A simple theft of sacred goods from a church was, under a law of July 1682, punishable with death or forced labour in the galleys. However, if profanation was judged to have occurred, which it was in Cauvelet's case, then, as in Amiens in 1782, the thief could have his or her hands cut off before being burned alive.⁷⁵

A pamphlet written about the St. Roch theft described the thieves as being "guilty of the greatest of crimes, the theft of sacred vases", proving that "nothing is sacred for them".⁷⁶ But while contemporaries thought that the thieves' action showed a sacrilegious lack of belief in the stolen objects' religious value, it is arguable that the thieves' actually feared the power of their booty. After all, they got rid of the Holy Host as soon as they could; throwing it into the gutter immediately outside St. Roch and dispensing with St.

⁶⁹ Ibid., Doc. 3777,

⁷⁰ Anon, "Détail de l'horrible complot et exécrable sacrilège commis dans l'église de Saint-Roch, par des brigands inconnus qui ont volé les vases sacrés et foulés les saintes hosties dans un tas d'ordures, sous le passage Saint-Roch", Paris, 1790, pp. 4-5.

⁷¹ In M. Alletz's theological dictionary of 1767 (op cit), sacrilege is said to occur when someone, "profanes something Holy or consecrated to God: as are holy spaces, churches, cemeteries, monasteries or the holy sacraments; prayers, the ceremonies of the Church and all that belongs to the Cult of God, such as images, crosses, sacred vases or ornaments."

⁷² "Détail de l'horrible complot" op cit, p. 5.

⁷³ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 3, Doc. 3776,

⁷⁴ Ibid., Doc. 3778,

⁷⁵ Marcel Marion, "Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles", Paris, 1968, p. 497.

⁷⁶ "Détail de l'horrible complot" op cit, p. 7.

Eustache's Host at the Palais Royal. If they did not regard the Host as having a kind of religious power, then why throw it away and leave evidence for the police? The District de St. Roch clearly wished to signify its opposition to an outrage committed in the space in which it assembled. So, it commissioned a replacement ciborium from the silversmith Odier and offered it to the church's chapter as a sign of thanks to them, presumably for their previous co-operation.⁷⁷ Thus, at the very time when sales of nationalised goods were beginning to accelerate in Paris, the St. Roch district were giving goods back to their parish church. Their gift can be seen as an indication of the district committee's own Catholic faith or as an effort to prevent the Catholics whom they represented from feeling further alienated by the treatment of Church silver during the revolution. The district used the fate of Catholic representational objects to prove that it, as a secular revolutionary body, was a protector of the Church, despite the contrary accusations of the likes of Maury and the Chapter of Notre-Dame. In the case of these thefts, the objects' material value was a concern to all the parties involved; the thieves clearly wanted the silver, the clergy had their silverware replaced and a pamphlet reporting the whole incident railed against the loss of national goods.⁷⁸ But all of the concerned parties subordinated material concerns to anger at an act of sacrilege on objects principally discussed in religious terms and nobody mentioned the objects' aesthetic value. One can speculate that to opponents of the nationalisation of Church property, the policy was similarly regarded as theft that was objected to on similar religious and material grounds to those discussed above.

We begin to grasp how complicated the position of Church images was during this period; the different ways of weighing up the objects' value and the number of diverse positions that could be taken regarding their fate. Such positions shaped, and were shaped by, one's broader religio-political views. Church art was truly polysemic, connoting many different meanings for different people, but also serving to construct and/or reinforce meanings. The threat that nationalisation posed to the physical integrity of Catholic representational objects, prompted by a desire to re-use its material value for secular ends, had led to serious differences of opinion on both religious and political grounds between individuals and institutions. Opposition was considerably less widespread when, on 19 June 1790, a decree was passed ordering the "suppression" of all coats-of-arms, including those in churches. The political agenda of the revolution was implacably opposed to the system of "feudalism". Unlike religious imagery, one could not safely disapprove of the iconoclastic decree in terms of the values that had originally

⁷⁷ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 2, Doc. 1134.

⁷⁸ "Détail de l'horrible complot" op cit.

led to the production of the imagery. Any individual who did so would have betrayed aristocratic sympathies, appeared counter-revolutionary and risked facing the wrath of self-proclaimed “patriots”. Nevertheless, it is important not to imagine that a sudden and thorough removal of all “feudal signs” occurred. As we will see below, many coats-of-arms still survived in Parisian churches in 1793 and 1794. Removals did begin in 1790, but not quickly enough for some of the sections that had replaced the District administrations in the summer and autumn of 1790. The Section des Postes, for example, wrote to the municipal Administration of Public Works (APW) on 4 December 1790, asking them to come and destroy the arms of d’Orléans and Penthièvre that were carved on the wood-work of two sets of seats in St. Eustache.⁷⁹ On 8 December, the Department sent a letter promising to do the work the next day.⁸⁰ In fact, it was not completed until 17 December.⁸¹ Thus, even with an explicit demand from a Sectional committee that did not want to meet in a room marked with the arms of now discredited d’Orléans family, work was not necessarily prompt. In fact, when the workmen finally completed the removal of the signs of feudalism in St. Eustache, they moved on to destroy the d’Orléans’ coats of arms in the Palais Royal. The arms had already been covered with plaster in this space that had long been a meeting point for discussion of revolutionary events. This contingency measure had been applied through much of Paris; owners of buildings marked with coats-of-arms had, perhaps, hoped that more permanent re-signification was not necessary. As for public buildings, a round of plastering put off the need for a large and labour intensive programme of removals-by-chisel. Nevertheless, albeit gradually, the signs of *ancien-régime*, non-revolutionary secular authority were being removed from churches.

We shall now focus on aesthetic value and historical value as constituting two of the five principal sets of criteria by which the value of religious and “feudal” imagery was calculated by some Parisians (historical value being the only one not mentioned so far). On 12 January 1790, an administrator called Doyen wrote a circular letter concerning the treatment of nationalised silver.⁸² “It has happened”, he wrote, “that many of these monuments have been deposed at the [Hôtel de] Ville without attention and that one could destroy them before the examination that I have ordained, there are perhaps among these

⁷⁹ Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, Vol. 3, Doc. 2006.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Doc. 2018

⁸¹ Ibid., Doc. 2011.

⁸² The author did not sign his first name. However, given his concerns, it seems likely that this Doyen is the man of the same name who subsequently joined the Commission of Monuments.

pieces some whose loss would be irreparable. [...] You know that those appointed to sell the furniture or effects are not always capable of knowing the merit of these works and do not hesitate to melt down works that are precious because of their rarity or the beauty of their craftsmanship.” Doyen said that he would like the Committee for the Alienation of National Goods to be informed of his concerns, adding that no object ought to be melted down until it “has been examined by *savants* designated as being capable of distinguishing merit or mediocrity”.⁸³ The Committee for the Alienation of National Goods regulated the Parisian municipality’s Administration of National Goods. In turn, this committee charged the APW to appoint entrepreneurs to organise the removal of nationalised goods to the municipal forge. Thus, Doyen was actually arguing that the workers appointed by the APW were artisans who lacked the connoisseurial knowledge needed to pick out objects of particular historic or aesthetic value. Implicitly, Doyen’s letter revealed a hierarchy of objects and, indeed, of the sets of criteria we have identified; high aesthetic or historical value (as judged by “*savants*”) out-weighed material value and could save objects from the crucible even if their religious value to Catholics could not preserve them. But, from our discussion of the religious and material values of art, it is clear that not all Parisians subscribed to the *savants*’ set of priorities. On the contrary, for many Parisians the order of priorities would appear to have been totally different with religious value coming first and aesthetic and historical value last. Nevertheless, from the opening weeks of 1790, there was mounting concern among the various national committees about the potential loss of aesthetically and historically valuable goods as a result of nationalisation. On 20 March 1790, a decree was issued stating that municipalities must prepare inventories of the nationalised goods and silver under their control. A month later, districts were informed that if their municipality had not made such an inventory of their area, they were to do it themselves.⁸⁴ While these inventories could have given a “*savant*” an idea of what might need short-listing for preservation on aesthetic or historical grounds, they still suffered from the problem identified by Doyen; would the inventory makers be able to distinguish between “merit and mediocrity”?

The vast majority of men initially charged by the various Districts of Paris to administer the “acquisition of ecclesiastical and denominational goods” were artists or building entrepreneurs. However, some members of the districts were unhappy with this situation. On 7 April 1790, representatives of the District de St.-Martin-des-Champs ruled that such men should not be allowed to be directly or indirectly involved in pricing,

⁸³ A. N., F17 1036A.

⁸⁴ A. N., F17 1036A.

selling or buying of the nationalised goods, because they stood to gain from the sales.⁸⁵ The districts' main concern was that the maximum amount of money should be raised for the nation, the aesthetic triage of objects was not an issue. They made this point clear by insisting that they should nominate commissioners to sit on the municipality's Administration of Nationalised Goods to ensure good practice. The districts declared that, "considering that the renaissance of the national credit depended on" the sale of such goods, the commissioners must report back every fortnight to the collected representatives of the districts.⁸⁶ As such, it is clear that it was the material value of the goods that pre-occupied the districts. Their desire to prevent cupidity among commissioners meant that artists were to be all but excluded from the process of inventory making. Yet, artists were a key repository of the kind of knowledge of aesthetic value that Doyeu so wished to be the grounds for the preservation of some Church goods. A situation was developing in which members of different administrative bodies valued art according to different sets of criteria to one another and to those criteria used by a variety of the people they represented. In fact, on 7 June 1790, Bailly complained that dealing with the sale of nationalised goods was difficult because he was always caught between bodies with very different "pretensions".⁸⁷ Preventing the municipality from usurping control over all decision making was certainly one of the districts' concerns. As such, the treatment of art became one of the focal points of a broader confrontation over legitimate political representation. This situation came to a particularly dramatic head in 1792, as we will see in chapter 4.

Despite the districts' apparent lack of interest, *savants* continued to express concern over the sale or destruction of religious art. On 4 October, an address from the antiquarian Puthod de Maison-Rouge was read in the National Assembly. He called for the representatives of the people to remember that the "monuments of piety" were "for the most part precious monuments of [the nation's] history".⁸⁸ In other words, if Catholic objects were not valued on religious grounds, they still must be valued on historical grounds. Two days later, the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture asked that masterpieces be removed from confiscated nationalised lands and conserved in a suitable location.⁸⁹ As an official document produced in 1791 noted, under the 1789

⁸⁵ Lacroix op cit, series 1, volume 4, p p. 585.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 713.

⁸⁸ Edouard Pommier, *Le théorie des arts*, pp. 177, 178 in Philippe Bordes and Régis Michel (eds.), "Aux Armes et Aux Arts! Les Arts Pendant La Révolution 1789–1799", Paris, 1988, pp.167–199.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

nationalisation rules, the Committee for the Alienation of Nationalised Goods could have sold goods that the Ecclesiastical Committee deemed worthy of preservation on aesthetic or historical grounds.⁹⁰ In order to address this problem, on 8 October 1790, members of the two committees met for the first time under the name of the United Committees. They wished to resolve a situation that was receiving increasing attention and, henceforth, they met twice a week. On 13 October 1790, Talleyrand joined the calls in the National Assembly for the preservation of masterpieces.⁹¹ On the same day, the legislature ruled that all communes were to put seals on buildings and to distinguish between the contents that were to be sold and those that were to be taken to depots because they were “precious to connoisseurs”.⁹² It was decided that a “commission of *savants*”, made-up of “famous artists”, ought to be formed to carry out the triage of objects for preservation. This idea was officially sanctioned on 19 October and the way was paved for the formation of the Commission of Monuments (CoM).⁹³ On 3 November, the United Committees ordered that the CoM be formed immediately to work in co-operation with them.⁹⁴ Three days later the National Assembly re-iterated its ruling that the municipalities must promptly begin inventories of all nationalised buildings.

While some inventories had already been made, the municipality of Paris began to step up their production and, the following year, the eight-man CoM would take over most of this work.⁹⁵ Making inventories involved placing revolutionary seals on each part of the church until its contents had been listed, further signifying to Catholics that the buildings were very much under the control of the secular authorities. By 1791, the head of the Parisian APW, La Rouchefoucauld, was able to declare that he believed that his committee, working in conjunction with the United Committees and the “*savants*”, had been utterly successful in their preservationist efforts. But, as we will see in the next chapter, the colleagues he named did not universally share La Rouchefoucauld’s interpretation of the project’s success. In fact, the various administrations continued to place greater emphasis on one or another set of criteria in evaluating art, even when they

⁹⁰Anon, “Détails sur le travail des Comités de l’assemblée Relativement à tout le mobilier des maisons ecclésiastiques, et religieuses et notamment à tous monumens [sic]”, 1790, A. N. F17 1036A.

⁹¹ Edouard Pommier op cit, pp.177–178.

⁹²Anon, “Lettre à un membre de l’Assemblée nationale, sur l’état du travail des Domaines nationaux et de la conservation des monumens, [sic] bibliothèques, etc. lors de la clôture de l’Assemblée nationale constituante; par un membre du Comité d’aliénation”, Paris, 1791, p. 15.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ “Détails sur le travail” op cit.

⁹⁵ For example, the municipal officer Roard and the painter Lemonnier made an inventory of Notre-Dame on 18 November 1790. A. N., F17/1261, dossier 2, no. 18.

acknowledged the possibility of other kinds of value existing. As a result, the United Committees, the CoM, the APW, the municipal assembly and the sectional assemblies were all to come into frequent conflict over the treatment of material signs.

2.4. Was the revolution iconoclastic from the outset?

In this chapter we have discussed the destruction of a portion of the silver objects owned by Roman Catholic churches and communities in Paris 1789–1790. Clearly, given the way we are using the term, the melting down of these objects can be called iconoclasm and, no doubt, the same can be said of the destruction of coats-of-arms in 1790. Equally, we can have no hesitation in describing the incidents outlined in chapter 1 as having also been iconoclasm. Up to this point we have looked at spontaneous iconoclastic acts perpetrated by “the people” and at official iconoclasm organised by representatives of both royal and revolutionary authority. As such, it is clear that there was iconoclasm from the outset of the revolution. The destruction of images served as actual or discursive rallying points for various political outlooks. But what about the re-signification of spaces and their images, was the process of changing their usage iconoclasm? Clearly, the answer is no because the objects in question were not physically altered. However, the representational objects in question were altered semiotically and the way in which they functioned as vehicles of meaning changed. This is indicative of the fact that, as a function of broader discursive changes, a significant number of Parisians altered the ways in which they thought about and treated certain kinds of material signs whose treatment became sites of discursive and actual conflict. It is the contention of this study that we need to understand the new and problematic position that representational objects had in a city in political and religious paradigm crisis, if we wish to understand how and why iconoclasm became more widespread in later years.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ I am using the term “paradigm crisis” in the sense outlined by Kuhn. That is to say, a political or religious paradigm crisis would be the result of one or more political and/or religious paradigms being championed by people who challenged the dominant paradigms’ ability to explain and organise related areas of existence. As we will discuss in chapter 5, a paradigm crisis, as Kuhn noted, often entails

The destruction of representational objects was just one aspect of revolutionary change, but iconoclasm and representations of it helped people to imagine the revolution. Iconoclasm was a material manifestation of changing ideas and feelings. Fragments of some of the images that were attacked, as noted above, survived as indexical signs denoting and connoting a process of change and conflict. Other signs were simply erased. However, perhaps the most important iconoclastic event for Parisians imagining the revolution involved both the erasure of the material sign and the transformation of its debris into indexical signs – the dismantling of the Bastille. As discussed at the start of this chapter, the storming of the prison had given the building a new meaning as a symbol. It was only when the dismantling of the building began, coordinated by the entrepreneur Palloy, that we can say that abstract re-signification became actual an iconoclastic attack on the prison's old meaning. Once the work was complete and the prison erased, a space remained that was, if one understood the convention, highly symbolic and indexical.⁹⁷ Palloy sent out individual stones from the prison's walls to every district in Paris and to municipalities and districts throughout the provinces.⁹⁸ These huge stones were symbols of "liberty", often delivered by "apostles of liberty". Once one understood what the stones were and why they symbolised what they did, they also worked as indexical signs of the storming and destruction of the Bastille. What is more, many of them were not only "re-symbolised" and, in the process, "indexicalised", they were also carved into the shape of the Bastille itself and, therefore, "iconised" in a Piercian sense. By removing the fragments from their original context, their lingering power to partly connote a hated signified, royal despotism, was finally diminished by transforming them into symbols of freedom.

Other than its sheer fame, the dismantling of the Bastille was an exceptional iconoclastic event in another way – hardly anyone opposed it. The building had no religious value, so Catholics could not be offended because of their faith. *Savants* did not care for its architecture and, as such, it was not defended on aesthetic grounds. While the building had a kind of historical value, it was the traces of this very history that Parisians wished to destroy. Even Louis XVI had thought the building to be an inappropriate symbol of an

competing groups of people using the same vocabulary in very different ways. Thomas S. Kuhn, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions", London, 1970.

⁹⁷ For a discussion of some of the monuments proposed to fill the gapping space left by the absent Bastille see: James Leith, "Space and Revolution. Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France 1789–1799", London, 1991.

⁹⁸ We will consider specific examples of the use of these stones in chapters 3 and 5. We will also be discussing the role of Palloy in the events of 10 August 1792 in chapter 4.

unenlightened age, and had considered its demolition in the 1780s.⁹⁹ What is more, the prison's material value was only the sum of the re-sale or re-use of its stones and land, this did not constitute grounds for keeping it intact. Thus, the destruction of the fortress-prison was a moment in the revolution when all who were pro-reform, no matter how sweeping nor how limited, were in favour of the same iconoclastic course of action. This, as we will see in later chapters, was an extremely rare state of consensus for an iconoclastic event to achieve.

The dissemination of the Bastille's stones served to reinforce the significance of the storming of the prison. By the time the stones arrived in the districts of Paris, many people would either have witnessed the dismantling themselves, heard about it (possibly through the ceremonies discussed above) or seen one of the numerous prints and/or paintings of the deconstruction work. For print-makers and painters the dismantling of the Bastille was an ideal visual metaphor for the revolutionary dismantling of the old regime (figs. 10 & 11). Iconoclastic motifs were also quite common in more allegorical prints, as well as the reportage prints we discussed in chapter one. If the revolution was about change from the old to the new, then how was the *imagier* to represent it? Depicting the crushing or trampling of the old signs was one possible way around a representational problem. For example, a print, "La Liberté triomphe et détruit les abus" (fig. 12), shows an allegorical figure of Liberty throwing down lightning onto smashed-up signs of feudalism and royalty, including a broken yoke and chain. The implication is that Liberty is iconoclastic. In the background, caught in shadow, is the partly dismantled Bastille, also denoting the destruction of "abuses". Elsewhere in the composition the symbols of liberty are well lit and ascendant with a red bonnet raised on a pike and a banner marked "liberty" above an altar with the words "abolition of seigneurial rights" written upon it. Thus, the victory of liberty over abuse is represented by showing the symbols of the former as being safe and the symbols of the latter as having been destroyed or being destroyed. Another example is an aquatint entitled "Nuit du 4 au 5 août 1789 ou le délire patriotique" (fig. 13). Many versions of this image were produced in Paris and the provinces. The print shows four men from the third Estate using threshing tools to smash nobles' armour and swords, bishops' miters and crooks, coats-of-arms and royal medals. Towering above the symbols, with a church in the background, the working men are also allegorical iconoclasts whose threshing signifies

⁹⁹ Godechot op cit, pp. 263–266.

the extraction of wealth from the other Estates, including Church silver. These kinds of widely disseminated images drew a connection between revolution and the iconoclastic destruction of certain kinds of signs.

Other prints did not depict the actual destruction of material signs but re-signified them with humour that undermined their originally serious meaning. It is arguable that such images had “iconoclastic tendencies” because they promoted disrespect for the derided representational objects included in the composition. For example, in the print “Je t’avais dit mon ami qu’ils nous feraient tout rendre” (fig. 14) a member of the third Estate administers an enema to a clergyman who moans to an aristocrat about the ordeal that he too will face. All three figures wear distinguishing signs: the nobleman his sword, the cleric his robes, the member of the third estate a liberty bonnet. The cleric, the aristocrat and implicitly their signs of rank are undermined with derisive laughter. Dozens of print designs were produced using this vocabulary of signs in combination with humour. Such derisive subversion of material signs was similar to the carnival tradition’s use of representational objects, manifesting comparable “iconoclastic tendencies”. Carnival merry-making was suppressed in 1790 on the grounds that it posed a threat to public order¹⁰⁰ because, as the mayor claimed, it encouraged “popular license” and “the insulting of passersby”.¹⁰¹ Yet, the revolutionary authorities cannot have savoured the prospect that they would themselves have been the target of many of the jokes during the 1790 carnival. A pamphlet published in that year railed against the authorities’ suppression of the festivities. Taking on the persona of the carnival, the author wrote, “One of my ceremonies to which I was most attached was the promenade of the *boeuf-gras*.”¹⁰² His description of the event makes very clear the potential for lampooning the revolutionary authorities. The procession included a child dressed in “the attributes of foolish royalty riding through the streets of Paris” on a giant bull, accompanied by

¹⁰⁰ It is possible that the procession to the Virgin on the *rue aux Ours* was also suppressed on these grounds. According to Louis-Sébastien Mercier’s account of the procession, it involved the burning of an effigy of a Swiss Guard, carried on the shoulders of a participant. The effigy was “made to make irreverencies in front of all the plaster Virgins that it met” on the route. The effigy was also stuffed with fireworks and its burning must have been quite spectacular. The whole celebration was evidently difficult to police, involving large numbers of people. Jeffry Kaplow (ed.), “Louis-Sébastien Mercier. Le tableau de Paris”, Paris, 1998, p. 267. The banned annual ceremony is particularly interesting because it involved a ritual iconoclastic response to the original act of iconoclasm. One could argue that the traditional story and festival served to remind people that iconoclastic acts against Catholic statues were wrong and could even provoke a celestial response.

¹⁰¹ Tuetey cop cit, “Répertoire”, Vol. 2, Doc. 2939.

¹⁰² Carnaval [pseud.], “Le Carnaval politique de 1790, ou Exil de Mardi-Gras à l’Assemblée Nationale, aux Tuileries, au Châtelet, et à la Commune”, Paris, 1790

“butchers who, axe in hand, appear like the Great and the Tribunes of the People of ancient Rome, of which you are ridiculous imitators”. The pamphlet went on to describe the precise roles that the king, queen, National Guards and Marat (among others) could play in carnival scenes. Thus, one can argue that the banning of the carnival was a precautionary act, intended to prevent the famously spontaneous event from incorporating the diminishment of revolutionary symbols that had to be respected. Both the carnival tradition and the emergent print culture indicate the “iconoclastic tendencies” of popular culture at this time. Perhaps the ways of thinking about and treating material signs that these phenomena reflected and disseminated, helped to make actual iconoclasm more readily acceptable as a way of imagining and constructing the revolution. Yet, the banning of the carnival suggests an important point: only certain types of iconoclasm and/or activities with “iconoclastic tendencies” could be tolerated by the authorities. Firstly, iconoclastic attacks on symbols of secular revolutionary authority could not be allowed. Secondly, unofficial iconoclasm, unregulated by the authorities, posed a threat to public order and could not be permitted. Iconoclastic activities might have constituted key elements of the early revolutionary *journées*, they might have been an intrinsic part of the revolutionary plan to alleviate the national debt, but they were now only acceptable if regulated by the authorities themselves.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has made several key observations that it will be useful to return to throughout the rest of this thesis. Space can be and was re-signified by alterations in its habitual functions. Such re-signification of space can, like the initial and intended signified meaning of the space, be polysemic. By changing the meanings of re-signified spaces, the images extant there have the context altered within which their meanings are established by viewers. If an object’s meaning and/or use changes, so could the degree of respect paid to its physical integrity. Also, different groups of people used different criteria when they calculated the value of images. I have identified political, material, religious, aesthetic and historical values as being the principal sets of criteria. It has been

shown that any one of these sets of criteria can be considered to be important by different people for different reasons at any given time. Furthermore, I have shown, particularly with reference to the formation of the CoM, that the application of one set of criteria does not entirely preclude knowledge of, or faith in, the importance of other sets of criteria to oneself or to others. The identified sets of criteria for judging value were not discrete; they were not necessarily (if ever) applied independently of one another. The application of one set of criteria over another could be contingent upon the beliefs/opinions of the viewer in relation to broader discourses on imagery, religion and politics. However, as we will see in subsequent chapters, different people and/or administrative bodies, did tend to privilege one set of evaluational criteria over the others. These differences could lead to discursive conflict and could also affect the actual physical treatment of images. Of key importance is the fact that the religious value of confiscated art was rarely discussed by any of the authorities charged with the administration of nationalised goods and/or their preservation. Yet, this set of criteria was of considerable importance for many individual Parisians and even some of the bodies representing them.

We have also seen that people of different political and religious persuasions could occasionally share approval or disapproval for specific iconoclastic acts. But a universal consensus of opinion for or against iconoclastic acts or policies was rarely achieved. It has been demonstrated that iconoclastic motifs were common in printed representations of the revolution, be they reportage or allegory. These prints both reflected a tendency to imagine radical change in iconoclastic terms and encouraged this way of imagining the revolution. "Iconoclastic tendencies" have also been identified in certain genres of caricatural prints and in some residual cultural practices – namely the carnival. We can say that the revolution was iconoclastic from the outset and it was represented, remembered and imagined as such. However, we have also identified certain anti-iconoclastic strands of revolutionary discourse: the banning of the carnival, the opposition of some Catholics to the destruction of silver, and the formation of the CoM. As a result, we can conclude that, for a multiplicity of reasons, various Parisians could be simultaneously iconophobic and iconophilic in their treatment of different kinds of images in different circumstances, leading to iconoclasm or preservationist efforts. But together, these factors could jeopardise automatic respect being paid to the physical integrity of certain kinds of representational objects.

Chapter 3

The use and abuse of religious art in Paris, 1791

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the troubles caused in Paris by the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and by its requirement that priests, monks and nuns swore an oath of allegiance to it (3.2). In many respects, this aspect of chapter 3 is an extension of the previous chapter's argument. That is to say, the swearing of the oath of the clergy in religious spaces changed churches' functions and meanings. Imagery within the spaces was, accordingly, regarded and treated differently by various people and my discussion of the oath will focus on this issue. In section 3.3, I will move on to discuss the use of religious images in a public protest that had iconoclastic tendencies and took place at the church of the Théatins, on the 17 April 1791. In order to properly contextualise these events, I will look at the ways in which religious objects functioned for many Parisians in the late eighteenth century, and at issues of idolatry and profanation. This will allow the development of a line of argument that can explain how such objects came to be attacked by people, many of who were probably Catholics. Section 3.3 will also develop a context in which to consider a full-blown iconoclastic attack at the church of the Théatins, on 2 June 1791, discussed in section 3.4. We will be looking at the ways in which that attack was represented before moving on to discuss the responses of some Catholics to this and other outbreaks of iconoclasm. As in 3.3, it will be shown that questions of perceived religious and political legitimacy were of key importance in affecting the ways in which people treated religious imagery in this period. Whether people chose to attack or preserve religious images and/or support or oppose the authorities' policies on the treatment of images was contingent upon discourses on legitimacy. This section of the chapter ends by considering the difficult position of the secular authorities charged with maintaining some semblance of political consensus and preserving/selling nationalised goods that had become sites for complex conflicts. The chapter closes by relating its argument to Oliver Christin's ideas on the autonomisation of aesthetic discourse on art, arguing that his concepts are of limited use to historians of revolutionary iconoclasm.

3.2 The Civil Oath of the Clergy

On 26 December 1790 the National Assembly declared that French priests had only eight days left to take the Civil oath of the Clergy or lose their pensions and posts. By 3 January the clergy of Notre-Dame, St. Roch, St. Eustache and St. Sulpice had still failed to swear the oath before the public. For many Roman Catholics, as will be shown below, the oath was an anathema because, in effect, it required their clergy to abjure the chain of Ecclesiastical command that was headed by the Pope and which they believed to be legitimised by the Gospels. It was precisely this view that the *curé* of St. Roch, Marduel had already expressed in a pamphlet published on 27 November 1790 – priests should refuse the oath, he said, in the interests of “holy religion”.¹ Other Catholics and non-Catholics, especially those with strong loyalties to the secular authorities, regarded unwillingness to swear the oath as being indicative of broader counter-revolutionary sympathies; a connection that would be gradually reinforced in the coming months. For many Parisians, this was a disagreement that offered no room for compromise; everybody had to declare whether their principal loyalties lay with the Pope or with the National Assembly.

Pro-juring² discourse regarded non-jurors as being politically and religiously illegitimate. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy had been passed by the National Assembly (that represented the sovereign people) and promulgated by the king. To refuse to comply with it was to fly in the face of the peoples’ will and, therefore, to lack any claim to political legitimacy in the terms of revolutionary discourse. For example, the *Chronique de Paris* said that non-juring priests were a “troop of rebels”.³ Pro-juring discourse also drew an explicit link between political and religious illegitimacy. As a famous revolutionary priest, Fauchet, declared, “The voice of the people is the regulatory voice of Catholicism”.⁴ A pamphlet published around the time of the oath made this link between religious and political legitimacy even clearer, echoing a comment made by the constitutional Archbishop of Paris, “The voice of the people is the voice of God”.⁵ Thus,

¹ Abbé Odon-Jean-Marie Delarc, “L’Église pendant la Révolution Française, 1789–1801”, Paris, 1838, vol. 1, p. 358.

² By pro-juror or pro-juring I mean someone who took the oath or supported those who took it. Non-juror/non-juring signifies the opposite.

³ “Chronique de Paris”, Paris, 10 January 1791.

⁴ A. Vaton op cit, p. 201.

⁵ Anon, “Adresse à tous les français, ou Exposition religieuse et patriotique des sentiments et la doctrine du Nouveau Clergé de Paris, sur la Constitution civile de la Clergé décrétée par l’Assemblée Nationale et sanctionnée par le Roi”, Paris, 1791, p. 5. This was a radical statement in the context of ecclesiastical

to deny the Constitution of the Clergy, passed by the legislature, was to deny not only the will of the people but also the will of God. Non-jurors were being designated as being out of touch with God; there could be only one true religion and it was constitutional. The two sets of Catholics had come to regard one another as heretics deviating from the true faith. Effectively, the spaces and objects associated with each group ceased to have religious value for the opposing faction and the treatment of such spaces and objects could potentially change as a result.

When the oath-taking ceremonies were held in Notre-Dame at the start of January 1791, representational objects were used to assert the legitimacy of the constitutional church and the consensus of king, nation and Church that it was supposed to reinforce. The *Tableau comparatif et impartial* described the imagery in Notre-Dame as follows, “between the altars of the Holy Virgin and Saint-Denis – and a little in front of them – [there was] an antique altar on top of 2 or 3 steps. It was square, three and a half feet high and three feet long and deep. This altar was decorated with a cornice and paintings on three sides; on the front was a civic crown of chain, surrounding the inscription *God, The Law, The King*. On the right-hand side, the side by the altar of the Holy Virgin, one saw a civic crown similar to the first, surrounding a club topped with a bonnet of liberty. On the left-hand side, a stack of weapons was surrounded with a similar crown; on the two sides were two candelabras”.⁶ The scheme signified that unity and the peoples’ strength and good civicism protected liberty with the help of the king’s power and that of the planned constitutional Church. To non-jurors, this signifiatory scheme must have seemed deeply inappropriate. Nevertheless, the actual oath taking passed without incident, as it did in some other parishes, for example, St. Eustache where the *curé* Poupart and 48 members of the local clergy swore allegiance to the Constitution of the Clergy.⁷ However, there were violent responses to the oath in other churches, despite the secular authorities’ plea that “excesses” be avoided.⁸ Sometimes the violence was against non-juring *curés*, like Pancemont who refused to swear in St. Sulpice⁹ or Marduel who did the same in St.

administration. The Oxford English Dictionary notes that the phrase “vox populi” had sixteenth century origins, but it was not typically used in the context of ecclesiastical administration.

⁶ Delarc op cit, vol. 1, pp. 370–371.

⁷ This figure was reported in the *Chronique de Paris* on 10 January 1791. La Croix op cit, series 1, vol. 2, p. 78. Daniel Roche has written that Poupart was “a man who enjoyed such prestige among the people of Paris that he was repeatedly elected to sit in the assemblies and was left untouched during the Terror”. Daniel Roche, “Journal of My Life by Jacques-Louis Ménétra”, New York, 1986, p. 355.

⁸ Delarc op cit, vol. 1, p. 364. Pancemont was hit over the head and knocked unconscious by angry pro-jurors.

⁹ Anon, “Histoire des événements arrivés sur la paroisse S. Sulpice pendant la révolution”, Paris, 1792, p. 39. Marduel was threatened with death during the ceremony.

Roch.¹⁰ On other occasions the anger of pro-jurors who had gathered for the oath-taking ceremonies jeopardised the physical integrity of representational objects in the churches. For example, following the *curé*'s refusal to swear the oath in St. Sulpice, furious pro-jurors clambered onto the confessional boxes, threatening to lynch the priest, shouting "The oath or the lantern!"¹¹ A pro-juring pamphlet appeared the next day and the local sectional authorities believed that it prompted a number of iconoclastic threats to burn down the Sulpicians' accommodation.¹² The religious value of the confession boxes and the religious buildings had been diminished because of their association with non-jurors thought to be both politically and religiously illegitimate.

Trouble continued in the weeks after the oath, especially in churches whose *curés* had not sworn; pro-jurors refused to accept the right of non-juring clergy to exercise any public function. For example, Marduel attempted to preside over a baptism on 18 January in St. Roch while the local sectional assembly was in session in the church's nave.¹³ He was attacked in a scene that a non-juring pamphlet called a "revolting profanation of the temple and the sacraments".¹⁴ Furthermore, pro-jurors explicitly threatened an act of iconoclasm in St. Roch in March 1791. No doubt exacerbated by Marduel's intransigent refusal to surrender his public functions, they had declared that they were going to attack the painted lists of confessors for the parish that were displayed in the church, because the lists included the names of several priests who had refused the oath. On 20 March 1791, Anastase Sedaine, son of the secretary of the Academy of Architecture, deposited the said tables with the police commissioners of the Section du Palais Royal, explaining that "the public had wanted to destroy them".¹⁵ Iconoclasm almost occurred because the tables signified a meaning for the church that was incompatible with the constitutional function that pro-jurors wanted the space to have.

Non-jurors also ceased to recognise the religious value of pro-juring symbols and spaces because of their link with the constitutional clergy. For example, on 6 April 1791, the superior of the *Soeurs de Saint-Anne* refused to open the community's chapel for the catechism of children preparing for their first communion. She said she recognised only Marduel as *curé* of Saint-Roch. The implication was that she felt she could not in good

¹⁰ Anon, "Détail de ce qui s'est passé hier dans les églises de Paris, au sujet du serment décrété par l'Assemblée nationale", Paris, 1791.

¹¹ LeClerq op cit, p.219.

¹² Hamel op cit, p. 237.

¹³ l'abbé ***, "Profanation arrivée en l'église Saint-Roch le 18 janvier 1791", Paris, 1791.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire", Vol. 2, Doc. 2151.

conscience prepare youngsters to become constitutional Catholics.¹⁶ Similarly, on 6 April, a number of parishioners of St. Roch complained to the police that the non-juring *Frères des écoles chrétiennes* refused to take their students to mass in St. Roch because they did not recognise the new *curé* as being legitimate.¹⁷ Bailly and the administrators of the Department of Paris promptly banned the monks from giving any more classes; they feared that the clerics would pass on their non-juring principles to the youth of the parish.¹⁸ After all, most educated children still received their schooling from Catholics. In St. Sulpice, the seminarists, all of whom had refused to swear the oath, left Paris on the day before the new *curé*'s installation; they were eager to avoid having to openly refuse to partake in the celebrations. Henceforth, the students went to their retreat in Issy every weekend because they would not be involved in any ceremonies in a constitutional church that they regarded as profaned by its use.¹⁹ Pamphlets and petitions were also being distributed in the parishes of St. Roch and St. Sulpice, campaigning for the rejection of the new pro-juring priests and challenging the legitimacy of the spaces in which they presided.²⁰ For example, a young boy and then an old woman were arrested separately for hawking such literature on the steps St. Sulpice in February.²¹ A struggle over the meaning and significance of the churches was taking place at their doors.

During the Easter celebrations of 1791, a group of 30 non-juring students from the St. Sulpice seminary took more dramatic action in an attempt to re-signify their ex-parish church as a religiously illegitimate space. They burst into the church at the start of a service held by the new *curé* and began chanting insults at the young ladies near the rear of the church. Their voices became louder and louder until they could be heard over the organ and the sermon.²² The new *curé*, Poiré, responded by preaching more loudly, but his words continued to be drowned out by the students until they suddenly fell silent when the blessing of the sacrament began. At this most solemn point in the ceremony, the seminarists led a dog into the church, held two pieces of wood on either side of its tail and smashed them together. Unsurprisingly, the creature yelped and began careering around the church. Its attackers followed in hot pursuit, screaming that the devil had

¹⁶ Ibid., Doc. 2179.

¹⁷ Ibid., Doc. 2190.

¹⁸ Ibid., Doc. 2189.

¹⁹ Gosselin op cit, p. 261.

²⁰ For example: Anon, "Adresse aux paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice", Paris, 1791; Anon, "Petition des paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice à l'Assemblée Nationale", Paris, 1791. A petition was reported in *Le Courier des 83 Départements*, vol. 22, no. 9, p. 138

²¹ La Croix op cit, series 2, vol. 1, pp.702–704.

²² Anon, "Détail de la Grande Révolution Arrivéé en l'Église de Saint-Sulpice, Hier à Sept Heures du Soir", Paris, 1791.

inhabited the church since the departure of Pancemont! The use of a dog as a part of their protest was, without doubt, deliberately intended to illustrate their point. As a police dictionary stated under the heading of “Churches, their decency”, it was the duty of all *curés* to ensure that their churches were in an appropriate state of cleanliness and that they, “never serve as retreats for dogs”.²³ Thus, the seminarists were signifying the fact that Poiré had allowed St. Sulpice to become a space unfit for worshipping God. To pro-jurors, the seminarists’ intervention was an act of sacrilegious profanation, but to the seminarists it was no such thing because they no longer even thought of the space or its contents as being sacred or holy.

The seminarists almost certainly agreed with the “Petit Catéchisme sur le premier Article du Symbole Credo sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam” published in late 1791, it described pro-jurors as being pagans.²⁴ It was in response to this kind of opinion that the author of a pamphlet published in 1791 wrote, “To believe that the new constitution is a schism or even a heresy, that the new priests are intruders, that the sacraments administered by them are ineffective, that one cannot with good conscience frequent the churches that they occupy, nor communicate spiritually with them, these are religious opinions whether true or false, that the law cannot allow.”²⁵ Yet, he went on to add that, “To manifest this opinion is not a crime [...]. These mystical declamations must be allowed to all sects in a free country.” His argument was convoluted but reasonable, adding a scale of greys to what, for many Parisians, had become a black and white issue of political and religious legitimacy versus illegitimacy; a conflict that jeopardised the safety of the representational objects in churches.

Representational objects again served as foci for a conflict between pro-jurors and non-jurors when, on 1 April, the non-juring clergy of St. Sulpice left their lodgings with their ornaments and books. A crowd gathered and harangued them for stealing nationalised goods. Commissioners from the Section arrived and managed to restore calm by making an inventory of the objects, all of which, it transpired, were the private belongings of the clergy.²⁶ Clearly, many pro-juring Parisians were well aware that the goods of the clergy, or at least those not bought by them as individuals, were owned by the whole nation. But

²³ Edme de La Poix de Ferminville, “Dictionnaire ou traité de la Police Générale des villes, bourgs, paroisses et seigneuries de la campagne”, Paris, 1771, p. 301.

²⁴ Jacques Herissay, “La vie religieuse à Paris sous la Terreur (1792–1794)”, Paris, 1952, p. 29.

²⁵ Anon, “Réflexions sur le Fanaticisme, Par un véritable ami de la révolution Française”, Paris, 1791, p. 10.

²⁶ Hamel op cit, p. 245, n.2.

some pro-jurors were becoming increasingly extreme in their response to the growing crisis over the oath. Like the Sulpician seminarists, they carried out acts of actual and theatrical violence to emphasise the religious illegitimacy of non-jurors, their sacred spaces and, implicitly, their cult objects. On 7 April 1791,²⁷ a number of attacks took place against non-juring communities of nuns allegedly teaching “fanaticism” to the children in their districts, holding unconstitutional masses and giving out food to the poor on the condition they did not support the constitutional Church. The nuns were publicly flagellated and insulted; in other words, treated like criminals. The riots reached such intensity that, on 18 April, the security forces closed four chapels because they could not cope with keeping rioters at bay.²⁸ Unsurprisingly, non-jurors took a dim view of the events, and Bailly, the mayor of Paris, no doubt concerned to keep the peace, said the revolutionaries’ behavior was “giving the law a tyrannical interpretation”.²⁹ The Directorate of the municipality agreed with his view, condemning the flagellations as “odious intolerance”.³⁰ But many pro-jurors were willing to ignore such sentiments; distrust of non-jurors had been mounting daily since the Pope had issued a Bref, on 10 March 1791, condemning the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.³¹ Yet, on 11 April, the Municipality of Paris decreed that, “the liberty of the individual, in his religious opinions and all those that do not wound public order, must guarantee him against all species of attack”.³² Just two days later a further Bref did nothing to calm the public mood.³³ Many constitutional clerics retracted their oaths, undermining the secular authorities’ hopes for a *rapprochement* between constitutional and Roman Catholics.³⁴

Seeking a compromise, on 15 April 1791 the Municipality declared that a nationalised church, the Théatins, should be made available for hire for six weeks, by a non-juring congregation headed by the ex-priest of Saint-Sulpice, Pancemont.³⁵ By offering an official space of worship to non-jurors, the municipality hoped to lessen popular paranoia

²⁷ La Croix op cit, series 2, Vol. 3, p. 483.

²⁸ Popular prints and pamphlets presented the events in comically scatological terms, saying, for example, that the Soeurs-Grises of St. Sulpice had escaped attack because the sight of their superior’s single-buttock back side, and the shit on those of her sisters, had put off the mob. If this report is to be trusted, then it could be argued that the sanctity of the convent and its art had been preserved by the nuns’ unfortunate circumstances. Either way, this view of events contrasts significantly with the disapproval of the secular authorities, who were intent on keeping public order.

²⁹ La Croix op cit, series 2, Vol. 3, p.483.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 562–564.

³¹ “Le Palais Royal” op cit, p. 187.

³² La Croix op cit, series 2, Vol. 3, pp. 562–564 & n. 1.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ John McManners op cit, “The French Revolution and the Church”, p. 60.

³⁵ La Croix op cit, series 2, Vol. 3, p. 604. The hire was also a way of maximising the authorities’ profits on the chapel while the formalities for its pending sale were finalised.

that secret masses were serving as a cover for the scheming of counter-revolutionary aristocrats.³⁶ Far from serving to put an end to all “species of attacks” motivated by religious differences, the hiring of the Théatins provoked both physical, verbal and iconoclastic violence. Like the burning of an effigy of the Pope, which took place on the 6 April 1791 (fig. 15), violence against symbols was to be used as a spectacular means of public protest outside the Théatins. For our purposes, the confrontation serves to further illustrate the diminishing religious value of non-jurors’ art in the minds of those Parisians who believed that the constitutional Church was solely legitimate in political and religious terms.

3.3. The first attack at the Théatins: the suspension of religious value

At 5:30 a.m. on Palm Sunday, 17 April 1791, one of the priests representing those hiring the Théatins arrived at the door of a Fontaine de Grenelle section officer’s home. He informed the officer that he wished to have the official seals which had been placed on the doors of the church some weeks earlier, removed, in order that preparations could begin for a service planned for later that morning. The officer, however, was entirely ignorant of any official approval for such a non-juring service, so he called his colleagues to convene to discuss the matter. The scheme to hire out the building had only been agreed by the municipality the day before and, given the time delay in the printing and distribution of the Directory’s minutes, the local section was unaware of the legality of the request. They sent a delegation to the municipality to clarify the situation. Meanwhile, in accordance with the Directory’s ruling, the non-jurors placed a placard above the door of the Théatins: “Building consecrated for a religious cult by a private Society. Peace and Liberty”.³⁷ The *Journal de la Municipalité et du Département de Paris* (of 24 April, 1791) described the reaction of pro-jurors, “*Le peuple*, instructed since the morning that non-juring priests were to celebrate in this church a divine service with pomp amidst a great

³⁶ This popular paranoia was aggravated by the knowledge that the Duc du Condé had, since February, been forming a non-juring counter-revolutionary army of émigrés at Worms.

¹ La Croix op cit, series 2, Vol. 3, pp. 622–623.

affluence of people known under the name of aristocrats, saw in this act an audacious contradiction of the law and the constitution, and they opposed the opening of doors of this church".³⁸ The report, like all of the others pertaining to the hiring out of the building, describes the pro-juring crowd as "le peuple". Roche has written that, "[...] eighteenth-century writers always distinguish the popular classes from what they were not. The chief criterion of the majority of writers is work".³⁹ Given the location of the Théatins on one of the busy *quais* of the Seine, within 50 yards of the local market, it seems likely that many of the crowd were workers from these two spaces, living locally.⁴⁰ The crowd might also have included people who had come across the river from the Tuileries gardens where a large number of Parisians were trying to stop the king from departing to St. Cloud for a hear mass given by a non-juring priest.⁴¹ It is likely that many Parisians knew of the close links between the non-juring Pancemont and the royal family; this could have encouraged people to see the incidents on both sides of the river as being connected.⁴²

Judging from the newspaper reports of the events around the Théatins on 17 April, a struggle began in the morning over access to the church. The non-juring priests and their congregation, in possession of the keys, seem to have tried to gain entry, despite the presence of official seals on the doors, only to be blocked by members of a gathering crowd, furious at what they regarded as an illegal and potentially counter-revolutionary meeting. The pro-jurors flagellated a number of the non-juring women, chased the rest of the non-jurors along *the rue du Bac* and then they hanged a number of statues of the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Daniel Roche, "The People of Paris", Lemington Spa, 1987, p. 40. Unfortunately, it is not possible to establish the precise composition of the crowd with any certainty. Unlike, for example, the storming of the Tuileries Palace on 10 August 1792, volleys of bullets (which never discriminate on the grounds of socio-economic background) do not provide us with a bloody cross-section of the crowd outside the Théatins.

One should add that while Roche's idea of "le peuple" seems applicable in this context, the phrase *le peuple* did not always have this kind signification. For example, in non-juring literature that criticised the inclusion of laymen in the assemblies that elected bishops in 1791, the laymen were often referred to as *le peuple*. However, given that only men of a certain, relatively high, tax band were able to enjoy such suffrage, it is clear that many of them did not work.

⁴⁰ It is possible that local workers were operating on a Sunday. Certainly, the police commissioners of the Section du Palais Royal were having considerable trouble preventing trading on Sundays and festivals, during this period. For example, see: Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire Générale". Vol. 2, Doc. 2277.

⁴¹ *Le Moniteur universel*, 19 April 1791. The size of the crowd in the Tuileries was bolstered when the Section du Palais Royal rang the general alarm, mobilising its population. Delarc op cit, vol. 1, p. 483.

⁴² Two of the king's daughters had taken part in St. Sulpice's pilgrimage to Mont St. Valérien the previous year. Anon, "Manuel à l'usage des paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice, pour le pèlerinage du Mont-Valérien dans l'octave de l'Exaltation de la Sainte-Croix", Paris, 1790, p. xvii.

Virgin Mary above the door outside the church.⁴³ The crowd also replaced the non-jurors' placard with one that read, "Opinion for priest-ridden aristocrats. Purgative medicine, distributed on Sunday 17 April".⁴⁴ Reactions to the attack on religious art were mixed. *Le Moniteur* (of 21 April 1791), remarked that the treatment of the statues of the Virgin "whipped up the hearts of honest people"; that is to say that good law-abiding citizens were offended by the hanging. Indeed, the actions of *le peuple* contravened the law in a number of ways, all of which relate to conflicts over legitimacy.

Those citizens who subscribed to the secular authorities' attitude to religious art might have sensed that the nationalised images inside and the church were in imminent danger, indeed, we will discuss below why they might have reached such a conclusion. The official view was that any representational object that the officers of the CoM judged to have a certain level of aesthetic/historical value ought not to have its physical integrity impinged upon by the conflicts of the wider world. It ought, in fact, to be regarded as being autonomous in relation to such conflicts and be preserved away from them in secure locations. Hence, any law-abiding citizens who had observed the placing of official seals on church goods and the inventory-making that was going on across the city, might have felt that the protest on the *quai* was verging on breaking the law – it threatened nationalised objects that might yet be preserved, or at least sold for the profit of the nation. Yet, the significance of religious art to many Parisians during this period was not conceived of in terms of the religious object's autonomy from conflict in the wider world nor, principally, in terms of its material, aesthetic or historical value. On the contrary, religious art was thoroughly integrated into the world's conflicts and into the metaphysical world beyond. The most significant factor in many Parisians' conception of the value of religious art lay in the fact that it was deemed to be a kind of interface between their own world and a realm beyond earthly troubles; a holy realm which transcended human history and its problems. It was on the grounds of this religious value that objects' physical integrity deserved respect. To understand the iconoclasm that took place at the Théatins, it is essential to fully grasp how religious images functioned for Catholics and, in addition, to appreciate how widely known such modes of reception were.

⁴³ Judging from inventories of the Théatins it does not seem that there were more than two statues of the Virgin in the church. Henri Stein, "État des Objets d'Art", Paris, 1890, p. 71. As a result, at least regarding the source of the statues, I am inclined to believe the otherwise inaccurate information provided by Abbé Barruel. He says that the Virgins were bought from a merchant on the Quai des Théatins, claiming that the merchant was subsequently fined for selling the images; no records of such a prosecution appear to have survived. However, Barruel conflated two separate attacks that occurred in the church, hence my assertion that his "facts" are unreliable. Abbé Barruel op cit, p. 112.

⁴⁴ "Détail de la défaite" op cit.

A dictionary published in 1777 discussed, with reference to the Council of Trent, the treatment appropriate to “holy images and representations of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, to the Holy Virgin, to the Angels and the Saints”. The author wrote that, “One must, according to this Council, honour and respect the holy images, not that one must believe that they have any particular virtue in themselves that obliges us to revere them, or that one must ask things of them in the manner of the Gentiles towards their idols; but one must revere them, because the honour that is offered to them is yielded to the objects that they represent, it is in this way this way that, when we salute the images or when we kneel before them, we adore God and we revere the Saints to which they bear a resemblance”.⁴⁵ Furthermore, in his theological dictionary, Alletz made it clear that, “The function of the saints in heaven is to present our prayers before the throne of God.”⁴⁶ The author of a pamphlet published in 1791 wrote that the Virgin had a similar role, “Jesus Christ, mediator between God and man under the title of Redeemer, wanted Mary to be mediator between us and him, by way of intercession and of prayers; that is the order established by God”.⁴⁷ Thus, to pray to images of saints or the Virgin was to appeal to the prototype to pass the prayer on to God, to whom he or she was close. By honouring such images one was really honouring their prototypes and, in turn, honouring God. The Saints’ images, therefore, received “‘relative honour’ that was given only to their prototypes and not to them”, in accordance with the rulings of the Synod of Nicaea.⁴⁸ In times of crisis, when resolution was needed, be it a matter of health, of business, of the heart or of broader conflict, prayers would be offered before religious images (particularly statues), implicating them in the resolution of worldly conflicts.

That these ways of thinking about religious images were widely known and widely applied is evidenced not only by the dictionaries, devotional books and pamphlets already referred to, but also by the huge numbers of religious prints produced during the eighteenth century. The cults around miraculous statues and the presence of ex-votos in churches also suggest that many Parisians believed in the power of religious images to intervene in worldly crises. We will be discussing the relationship between a specific miraculous statue and the iconoclasm at the Théatins below. Likewise, we will later discuss the treatment of such statues by non-jurors. Suffice it to say here that in 1791,

⁴⁵ Une Société de Religieux et de Jurisconsultes op cit, vol. 2, p. 138.

⁴⁶ M. Alletz op cit, p. 636.

⁴⁷ Abbé Dusquesne, “Les Grandeurs de Marie, ou Méditations pour chaque Octave des Fêtes de la Sainte Vierge”, Paris, 1791, vol. 2, p. 397.

⁴⁸ James Hastings (ed.), “Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics”, New York, 1914, vol. 7, p. 79.

statues of the Virgin Mary that were renowned for being miraculous could certainly be found in: St. Sulpice (known as “Notre-Dame de Liesse” or “Notre-Dame de Joie”),⁴⁹ St. Séverin (“Notre-Dame de Bonne-Espérance” or “Notre-Dame de Sainte-Espérance”),⁵⁰ the Picpus convent (“Notre-Dame de Paix”)⁵¹ and St. Etienne-des-Grès (Notre-Dame de Bonne-Déliverance). At least two other miraculous statues existed in Paris, Notre-Dame de Bonne-Nouvelle and Notre-Dame de Lorette,⁵² and another might have been situated in the Carmes de la Place Maubert.⁵³ In addition to these statues in churches, Notre-Dame de la Carole on the corner of the rue aux Ours was, as mentioned in the last chapter, the terminus for an annual procession, banned in 1789. This particular statue was reputed to have bled when a Swiss Guard struck it in 1418.⁵⁴ It is important to note that most of these statues were either wood or alabaster and, as such, had little material value.

However, moves were afoot within the Roman Catholic Church to end cults around particular images. The 1786 synod of Pistoia had produced a document that was rejected by the Tuscan bishops in 1787. The document declared that, “one must remove all those images in which it seems the people put a singular confidence or recognise a special virtue, against the decrees and the intention of the Church, such as one can see in those who form a special cult around a given image [...] as though God and the Saints listen in a special manner to the prayers which are made before it, or as if God attaches to that image the promise of giving His graces. To this end the Holy Synod wants to completely destroy the pernicious custom which consists of distinguishing certain images, especially those of the Virgin, with titles and particular names, generally vain and puerile.”⁵⁵ Despite

⁴⁹ Anon, “Histoire de la statue miraculeuse de Notre-Dame de Bonne-Déliverance vénérée dans la Chapelle des Religieuses hospitalières de Saint Thomas de Villeneuve, à Paris”, Paris, 1844, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid. I have not been able to find an explicit reference for the location of either of these Virgins.

⁵³ In an inventory of the Carmes de la Place Maubert, compiled by the municipal officer Roard, there is a mention of a “gothic alabaster statue” surrounded by ex-votos. The ex-votos suggest that this statue might have been regarded as being miraculous. The inventory is reproduced in Stein op cit, p. 110. However, Louis Millin noted in 1792 that the ex-votos were in a chapel that had stored a bottle of the Virgin Mary’s milk and a lock of the hair of Jesus. Therefore, the ex-votos could have been left in thanks for the relics’ intercession. Millin op cit, pp. 36–37.

⁵⁴ It is not, however, clear whether the statue in the street was the original. René Héron de Villefosse said that it was moved to St. Martin-des-Champs after the Swiss Guard attacked it. Furthermore, he claimed that the statue was removed from there by Dom Adam when the neighbouring monastery was closed during the revolution, and stored in his house where he built a chapel for it. René Héron de Villefosse op cit. However, the local police commissioner’s minutes of the removal of a statue of the Virgin from the rue aux Ours, on 25 October 1793, still survive. A. P. P., AA. 163, no. 139. It is possible that the statue on the street was a copy made after the attack by the Swiss Guard and the original statue was stored in the safer location of the church.

⁵⁵ Danièle Menozzi, “Les Images, l’Église et les Arts Visuels”, Paris, 1991, pp. 222–223. The 1786 synod also said that the covering of certain images as a mark of respect ought to stop. Ibid., p. 224.

the initial rejection of these ideas, in 1794 the Papal bull "*Auctorem Fidei*" proscribed "all special cults that the Faithful have the habit of especially offering to a particular Image". The bull also condemned the naming of Images in ways that were not taken from the Holy Scripture.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, as we have seen, the naming of particular statues was still common in Paris and, as this chapter will demonstrate, cults around particular images were also still common.

Many of the miraculous statues in Parisian churches were surrounded by ex-voto paintings, plaques and objects left in thanks for a saintly intervention prompted by the image's prototype. The gift was left, as Bernard Cousin has pointed out, by someone who "by this gesture wants, at the same time, to acquit themselves of their debt and to prolong the protection already acquired."⁵⁷ Ex-votos permanently signified the intercessionary efficacy of an image, often by depicting the act of intervention and the person helped, by being a simulacra of a cured body part, or by a simple written declaration of gratitude. During the revolution, only painted and/or marble plaque ex-votos tend to be mentioned in inventories of religious buildings that were made by municipal officers or members of the CoM. I have found definite references to painted ex-votos in various Parisian churches, some of them run by regular clergy and some of them by lay clergy: Notre-Dame de Paris,⁵⁸ Carmes de la Place Maubert,⁵⁹ St. Chapelle,⁶⁰ St-Germain-Le-Vieux,⁶¹ La Madelaine-En-La-Cité,⁶² Couvent des Cordeliers,⁶³ Minimines de la Place Royal,⁶⁴ Ste. Geneviève⁶⁵ and St. Eustache.⁶⁶ Other kinds of ex-votos lacked sufficient aesthetic, historical or material value to be worth

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Bernard Cousin, "Ex-votos de Provence: images de la religion populaire et de la vie d'autrefois", Paris, 1981, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁸ A. N., F17/1261, dossier 2, no. 18. Mentioned in an inventory made by a municipal officer on 18 november 1790. Another ex-voto, by Bourdon, was delivered to the depot des Petits Augustins in 1794 and came from Notre-Dame. "Inventaire des richesses d'art de la France. Archives du Musées des Monuments Français", Paris, 1886, p. 154.

⁵⁹ Stein op cit, p. 110. Two of these ex-votos were discussed by the connoisseur Louis Millin in his guide to national antiquities, published in 1792. One has to bear in mind that *savants* appreciated some examples of this genre of painting for their extreme age and, as such, historical value. Millin op cit, vol. 4, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 111. Mentioned in an inventory made by Roard on 24 February 1791.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.115. Mentioned in an inventory made by Roard on 9 June 1790.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 53. Mentioned in an inventory made by the municipal officer Bernier on 15 December 1790.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 97. Mentioned in an inventory made by municipal officers on 26 August 1791.

⁶⁵ The removal of all the ex-votos from this space was noted by the Revolutionary Committee of the Section du Panthéon Français on 31 October 1793. "Libraire des Gorands, catalogue du 15 février 1993", 186, to be found in M. R. F. (in the box labeled "Religion").

⁶⁶ Three ex-votos were delivered to the depot des Petits Augustins in 1794. Tuetey op cit, "Inventaire", p. 131.

noting in inventories or other official documentation, but that is not to say that they were not visible in many spaces that contained miraculous images or relics.⁶⁷ Ex-votos would have regularly reminded Parisian Catholics of the direct connection between religious imagery and the resolution of earthly problems. Even for non-Catholics, the new uses of religious spaces for revolutionary purposes (i.e. festivals, ceremonies and meetings) meant that they could witness ex-votos signifying the influence of Catholic ways of thinking about religious images, even if they themselves did not subscribe to such beliefs. It is clear that cults around particular images were still common and were also widely known of.

Furthermore, the intercessory power of images was a common theme in confraternity prints.⁶⁸ For example, a print showing Notre-Dame de Liesse from St. Sulpice, published by the confraternity of that name, probably in the late seventeenth century, depicted the statue dressed in ornate robes and crowned. The Virgin is surrounded by ex-voto objects (fig. 16). Beneath the image is a text that describes the confraternity's remit of offering a good Christian death to all, indulgences granted to members by Pope Clement X are also listed. The small images around the main image depict scenes from the story of the statue, it is shown being received from Heaven by three prisoners who, in the final sub-image, are baptised. Thus, the print serves as an advertisement for the confraternity and the intercessory efficacy of the statue, as well as the claim that the object was truly sacred because profane hands did not make it. While the print dates from up to a hundred years before this study's period, confraternity prints were still being produced in the 1780s and 1790s.⁶⁹ One has to remember the enormous volume of these prints that were produced annually. Jean-Michel Papillon wrote, in 1756, that since his grandfather had produced a print of Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Délivrance at Saint-Etienne-des-Grès 90 years earlier, between 5000 and 6000 copies had been printed every year (fig. 17). They were distributed to the members, who then passed them on to other Parisians. This means that more than 500,000 examples of a single image had been distributed.⁷⁰ Other

⁶⁷ J.A.S. Collin de Plancy, "Dictionnaire Critique des Reliques et des Images Miraculeuses", Paris, 1821, vol. 3, p. 107.

⁶⁸ Pro-revolutionary prints occasionally depicted ex-votos. For example, in 1791, a print appeared in the *Révolutions de Paris et Brabant* showing ex-votos around a statue of the Virgin Mary in a chapel. Described in Claude Langlois, "Le spectacle de la religion dans la gravure révolutionnaire (1789–1791), in *Pratiques religieuses dans l'Europe révolutionnaire (1770–1820)*, Brepols, 1986, pp. 684–685.

⁶⁹ For example, prints produced for confraternities based in: St. Eustache (1783), St. Roch (1783), Notre-Dame (1792), and an example from St. Sulpice, produced in 1793, that we will discuss in chapter 5. Jules Guiffrey, "Les Images des Confréries Parisiennes", in *Société d'Iconographie Parisienne*, Paris, 1910, p. xxviii, p. 26, p. 105.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

confraternities produced as few as 150 images per year but many distributed 500–1,000. If one bears in mind that, in 1777, after the reform of the confraternities, the parish of St. Sulpice still had 50 such organisations,⁷¹ then one can see that tens, maybe hundreds, of thousands of confraternity prints were distributed in a city with a population of only around half a million people. It is reasonable to speculate that some of the confraternity prints produced in the 1780s and 1790s included representations of miraculous statues and ex-votos, because confraternity images frequently used older versions as their prototypes. These images further disseminated and reinforced the view of religious art as having a direct role to play in everyday life.

A Police dictionary published in 1788 describes the distribution of a confraternity's images, making clear that their value was assessed in religious and not material terms and that this point was to be made to people who received the images. The author wrote, "this distribution is done by the people of the Congregation to whom are sent many sheets and images in the same packet, on the envelope of which is printed the manner by which one must make the distribution. One must announce the prints as a treasure; one says that it is part of the divine Jesus that one sends to them [...] one does not sell them".⁷² Other prints were simply posted on the pillars of churches.⁷³ The key point is that vast numbers of these images were visible in Paris, reflecting and reinforcing Catholic modes of reception. So why do so few survive? One could argue that, when confraternities were proscribed in 1792, it became risky to own them, this danger mounted in 1793–1794. For example, an old monk, Jacques Nicolas Adam, was condemned to death by the Revolutionary Tribunal during the Terror for having in his possession prints of the old confraternity of Notre-Dame-de-la-Carole on the rue aux Ours, marked with royal emblems.⁷⁴ Also confraternity prints tended to be produced annually, typically with minor alterations marking the election of new officers, and, as a result, old copies were disposed of. Guiffrey suggests that those prints that survived, did so in the hands of amateurs who generally only kept the examples produced by well respected artists – i.e. those with aesthetic and/or historical value. These arguments are important because together they suggest that some historians' might have seriously underestimated the prevalence of religious print ownership. Cissie Fairchilds' excellent empirical research suggests that

⁷¹ Ibid., p. ix.

⁷² M. des Essarts, "Dictionnaire universel de Police", Paris, 1788, vol. 3, p. 195.

⁷³ Jules Guiffrey op cit, p. xxii.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.xxiv, n. 3.

only 16% of Parisian house-holds owned religious images in the period 1771–1789.⁷⁵ The problem with this figure is that it is calculated from inventories of goods made by notaries following individuals' deaths. But most confraternity prints were distributed free of charge and had no exchange value. As such, they are extremely unlikely to appear in inventories because there is no probability of their ownership being legally contested on financial grounds when the inheritance was sorted out and the funeral paid for. What is more, such prints would be regularly replaced with new ones and, as a result, a collection of images would not necessarily develop.⁷⁶ Thus, the number of religious prints noted in an inventory does not necessarily indicate the number of such images that the deceased had come into contact with and/or owned. I am more inclined to agree with Daniel Roche's figure. He suggests that, in 1780, 65% of those wage earners wealthy enough to warrant having an inventory of goods compiled after their deaths, owned prints. Of these prints 65% had religious themes, yet, this might still be an underestimate because this research also used an inventory-based methodology.⁷⁷

One can conclude that miraculous statues made of cheap materials, ex-votos and religious prints indicate that a specifically Catholic mode of reception, which assessed imagery principally in terms of its religious value, was common in late eighteenth-century Paris. Even if the production of confraternity prints and ex-votos were slowing down after the middle of the century, a point that is hard to prove or disprove, most Parisians would still have had contact with both. One can assume that even non-Catholic Parisians were familiar with the ways in which religious images functioned for believers. As Abbé Dusquesne put it in a pamphlet published in 1791, "The simple people of today are left still running to the Temples of the mother of God to decorate the images, embellish the altars, celebrate the festivals".⁷⁸ These arguments about common ways of thinking about Catholic images are important to our discussion of the Théatins because they rest uneasily with the literal suspension of the religious value of the Virgin Mary statues and, as will be shown, with the fact that this iconoclastic attack made reference to a miraculous statue. However, these apparent contradictions can be overcome by recognising that pro-jurors'

⁷⁵ Cissie Fairchild, "Marketing the Counter-Reformation. Religious Objects and Consumerism in Early Modern France", in Christine Adams, Jack R. Censer and Lisa Jane Graham (eds.), *Vision and Revisions of Eighteenth-Century France*, Pennsylvania, 1997, p. 41, table 4.

⁷⁶ One could say that disposing of images was iconoclastic. However, one must appreciate that the print's user would not have seen it in this way. The image acted as a kind of receptacle for religious value that could be transferred to another image when the first was thrown away.

⁷⁷ Roche op cit, p. 222.

⁷⁸ Abbé Dusquesne op cit, vol. 2, p. 439.

belief in the non-jurors' loss of religious legitimacy had very clear implications for the kinds of treatment deemed appropriate for non-juring imagery.

I have discovered that in the inventory of the contents of the Théatins carried out by an agent of the municipality's Office of Liquidation, on 20 April 1791, a statue of the Virgin had been the focus of an unusual observation. Oddly for such an inventory, which usually applied only secular aesthetic criteria in assessing the pedagogic or historical value of a work of art, it was noted that an extremely old wooden Virgin was reputed to perform miraculous cures.⁷⁹ Thus, one could construe the crowd's *affiche*, "Opinion for priest-ridden aristocrats. Purgative medicine, distributed on Sunday 17 April", as being a derisive reference to the curative powers of the miraculous statue. As was argued earlier in this chapter, the previous months' discourse on the oath of the clergy had established the fact that the non-jurors were, at least in the minds of pro-jurors, an illegitimate sect. In this light, there is every reason to believe that pro-jurors, familiar with Catholic teaching on the use of images in religious practice, would have regarded the statue inside the non-juring space of the Théatins as being an idol. It was a "Statue or image of a false divinity, to which the blind and superstitious man gives divine honours".⁸⁰ Idolaters were defined in the 1787 Academic dictionary as being those people, "who adore idols and pay them honours due to God" or people who "adore idols or other false gods".⁸¹ As such, non-jurors, who by definition were worshipping a false God because theirs was not the true religion, they were praying only to the statue because God was listening exclusively to the prayers of constitutionals. Thus, to make a derisive reference to the miraculous statue was not irreligious, but an attack on irreligion, on religious practices defiled by Pancemont and his non-juring congregation. To coin a phrase used in pamphlet from this period, the iconoclasts might well have said, "I attack sacriligious abuses and not Holy truths".⁸² The very fact that the miraculous Virgin inside the Théatins failed to intercede to defend the non-jurors only served to further prove that the statue was no longer a "point of interface" with heaven.

The same logic of the public failure to intercede applied to the statues hanging above the church's door. By virtue of their literal attachment to the non-juring space, the Virgins were also signified as being non-juring objects. If Abbé Barruel is to be believed, two of the statues were left hanging in place after the crowd dispersed, so as to provide the non-

⁷⁹ Stein op cit, p. 71.

⁸⁰ Une Société de Religieux et de Jurisconsultes op cit, vol. 2, p. 135.

⁸¹ "Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française" op cit, vol. 1, p. 627.

⁸² Cérutti, "Lettre de M. Cérutti à Madame ***", Paris, s.d. (1791?), p. 12.

jurors with foci for their worship.⁸³ Following the logic of the religious illegitimacy of the miraculous Virgin inside the church, one could say that the hanging of the statues outside was an iconoclastic attack on idolatry. This was not an assault on religious imagery per se, but an attack on religious imagery that was being put to illegitimate use; after all, representational objects had their place in constitutional churches.⁸⁴ The crowd was using knowledge of the appropriate theological functioning of religious imagery, and the statues themselves, to illustrate their point; they were using representational objects as resources for public protest. Images, used for such ends, along with placards and graffiti, were the only resources available to *le peuple* of Paris to publicise their unmediated opinions in a more permanent way than a riot or spoken words could allow. By hanging the statues outside the church, in full view of the street, they were inviting non-jurors to practise their false religion in public. Ostensibly, the hanging tempted non-jurors out into the open, but when the bait failed to work it served to underline the non-jurors' lack of revolutionary transparency that the secretive masses they held were also thought to evidence. This point was further reinforced by the *affiche*'s reference to the non-jurors as being "aristocrats", a social group so often criticised in revolutionary discourse for their opaque manners, language and make-up, their masking of their true thoughts, feelings and beliefs. Thus, the hanging of the Virgins succinctly combined points about political and religious illegitimacy, which is a little ironic given that the municipal authorities had originally hired the building in order to regulate *secret* masses, lessen popular paranoia and pre-empt further popular interventions against non-jurors.

The hangings also connoted the criminality of both the statues and the "troop of rebels" for whose use they had been hoisted. Many pro-jurors thought that the non-jurors were defying the will of the people and breaking the law by gathering to hear a priest exercise an outlawed public function. In a way, the statues were being treated as criminal bodies; they were acting as substitutes for the non-jurors themselves and for their miraculous idol inside the church. The hanging played out in the symbolic realm the threats of "to the lantern" that had echoed around St. Sulpice when Pancemont so defiantly refused the oath. Furthermore, hanging the statues, rather than smashing them up or mutilating them, allowed the contested images to serve their new function as politicised signifiers for a longer period. The quasi-judicial nature of the protest was reinforced when a furious

⁸³ Barruel op cit, pp. 110–111.

⁸⁴ As Gobel, the Archbishop of Paris rhetorically asked constitutionals in 1791, "...do you believe that any changes have been operated on the objects of your cult and the dogmas submitted to your belief? Have your temples lost something of their old decoration?" Anon, "Lettre à M. Gobel, Évêque titulaire de Lydda, et Intrus de Paris", Paris, April 1791.

non-juror attempted to rip down the scatological placard posted by the crowd, only to be forced to sign it and then put it back up and “make honourable amends to the nation”.⁸⁵ The making of honourable amends was a practice traditionally associated with the judicial function of churches; a criminal would sometimes be expected to make a public apology, in front of a church, for the crime he or she had committed. This practice tended to be limited to Notre-Dame in this period and prints disseminated knowledge of this on-going function of religious spaces. For example, an image produced in 1790 depicts a prisoner⁸⁶ making honourable amends in front of the cathedral and also his hanging in the Place des Grèves in front of the townhall (fig. 18). In the scene before Notre-Dame the church’s judicial function is legitimised by the presence of National Guards who signify the space and the event as revolutionary. But at the Théatins the point was being derisively made that this non-juring space, could never, in principle, have such a public function.

The implication, in the inter-textual, quasi-judicial references between the placard, the spoken word and the statues inside and outside the church, is that the people involved believed they had every right to intervene violently in defense of the law. But official revolutionary discourse dictated that the secular authorities held a monopoly on such violence. Contravention of this paradigm might also have offended the “honest folk” who bore witness to the events on the *quai*. Shortly after the flagellation of non-juring women, the hanging and the posting of the replacement placard, the National Guard arrived to restore the peace, and took down the crowd’s *affiche*. Yet, as soon as the security forces had left, the people replaced the sign, adding beneath their message a new slogan which, by connoting their sovereignty, asserted that their actions were legitimate: “Taken down by order of Bailly [the mayor] and put back by order of the people”. When the authorities put up a second *affiche* “it was lacerated, cut into strips, condemned with outrage among imprecations against the Department, priests and the priest-ridden.”⁸⁷ The non-juring protestors clearly believed that the authorities were showing more tolerance to non-jurors than was appropriate given that the *sovereign* people wished to see non-jurors’ politically and religiously illegitimate worship censored. Yet, to the authorities, and perhaps to those “honest people”, the worship of the non-jurors was increasingly seen as legitimatised by a new and growing discourse on the right of the individual to religious

⁸⁵ Anon, “Détail de la défaite d’une armée de béguines fouettées hier au soir sur le quai des Théatins. Amende honorable et flagellation d’un aristocrate qui a méprisé les ordres du peuple”, Paris, 1791.

⁸⁶ It is possible that the prisoner is the Marquis de Favras, his honourable amends and/or his hanging (an unusual punishment) were represented in several other prints at this time. He had forged revolutionary paper money. See fig. 44.

⁸⁷ Delarc op cit, vol, 1, p. 477.

liberty. Such legal ambiguities were not readily resolved because, as yet, the National Assembly had not deliberated on the moves, made by the Commune of Paris, towards official tolerance of Roman Catholicism. The iconoclastic treatment of statues had been one of the resources available for the crowd to signify its position on the matter and to influence official policy-making.

During the protest outside the Théatins, several established ways of officially signifying authority and legitimacy (i.e. the use of placards and *affiches*, the administration of bodily punishment, the forceful intervention to establish the rule of law) had all been undermined by the crowd's use of derisive and scatological humour in conjunction with statuary. What is more, the humour deployed was of the very variety that the authorities were trying to remove from public life by banning the carnival and confiscating obscene prints that so often undermined figures of both secular and religious authority.⁸⁸ The motivation and message of the protest at the Théatins was at odds with official political discourse, and the ways in which images were used were also at odds with the official, "enlightened" conception of art as being a special category of objects that, in a civilised society, deserved to be free from impingements of physical integrity. This official conception of art stemmed from the secular academic tradition, which did not incorporate many overtly Catholic themes and, therefore, did not require the privileging of modes of reception which focused on the objects' religious value, nor the objects' interactive relationship with the world of conflicts. But *le peuple's* contact with academic art was largely limited to the biennial Salon of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the exhibition held by collectors in the Place Dauphine during Corpus Christi,⁸⁹ glances of paintings in dealers' windows, the ownership of prints and the almost ambient presence of statuary in public squares and gardens. Indeed, what little education most Parisians might have received with regards to art would have been from the priests, monks or nuns who taught them as children about the role of imagery in Catholicism. Hence, as has been shown, much of the art they came into regular daily contact with, and meditated upon, had religious themes, and its value was conceived of in primarily religious and not secular ways. In terms of habitual modes of reception – for *le peuple*, as opposed to the

⁸⁸ For example, the police commissioners of the Section du Palais Royal were, between 1789 and the end of 1791, regularly arresting colporteurs and dealers of "obscene" prints and literature in and around the Palais Royal. For some examples see: A. P. P., AA. 82, nos. 23 & 29, or Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 2, Docs. 1072, 1083, 1088, 1089, 1921, 1943, 1946, 2098, 2095, vol. 5 (2 of the Legislative Assembly) doc. 3331.

⁸⁹ Thomas E. Crow, "Painters and Public Life in eighteenth-century Paris", Yale, 1991 (pp. 82–88). These exhibitions are mentioned in a journal, from 1791–1792. The author says that one can see there the work of the "artistic plebs" and the members of the Academy of St. Luc. Gustave Isambert, "La vie à Paris pendant une année de la Révolution", Paris, 1896, p. 259.

authorities – it was perhaps not so great a leap between iconophilic engagement with religious art and iconophobic aggression towards it, especially when its religious legitimacy had been undermined by external discourses.

3.4 The second attack at the Théatins: responses to iconoclasm

The pro-jurors' protests against non-jurors continued to use symbolic violence against images in the weeks following the confrontation outside the Théatins. On the morning of the 3 May 1791, an eight-foot tall mannequin of the Pope, dressed in the aristocratic colour green, was brought to the Palais Royal and burnt beside the café le Foy.⁹⁰ The auto-da-fé was organised by the revolutionary journalist Desmoulin's, who made a point of stoking the fire with newspapers that supported the non-juring cause.⁹¹ To make the condemnatory point absolutely clear, the ashes were "cast to the four winds" like the ashes of a criminal, and the Pope held a dagger as a sign of subterfuge.⁹² A print of the episode, published in Desmoulin's newspaper *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, made clear the deliberate offence caused by this iconoclastic act (fig. 19). In the left foreground, a man appeals to the orator who stands on a table, raised above his Holiness. Just to the right, a woman pleads on bended knee with one of the men stoking the flames. Overturned chairs in the foreground and the crowd amassing in the background to witness the spectacle add to the sense of conflict. Like the prints discussed at the end of the last chapter, this was another image that validated the use of iconoclasm as a way of imagining revolution and, indeed, preserving it from its enemies. Other prints from 1791 served to reinforce the notion that non-jurors were religiously illegitimate. For example, one image, quite possibly referring to the increasingly notorious Pancemont, was accompanied by text that said that the print showed a *curé* being accompanied by two devils into the Empire of Demons to ask Beelzebub if it was possible to stop the Civil Constitution of the Clergy (fig. 20).

⁹⁰Anon, "Grand Requisitoire de la Brulure du Pape et de son Bref", Paris, 1791, p. 4.

⁹¹ "Le Palais-Royal" op cit, p. 188.

⁹² "Grand Requisitoire" op cit, p. 4.

Despite the rising level of pro-juring anger, or possibly because of it, the secular authorities had, since the problems at the Théatins in April, been licensing some non-juring churches and chapels for worship. Typically, these were the spaces used by non-juring communities of monks or nuns whose charitable functions meant they had not yet been disbanded. However, their places of worship were only to be used by the communities themselves and were not to be open to the public. For example, the chapel of the Dames de Ste. Agnes in the parish of St. Eustache was opened for the saying of masses on 3 May 1791,⁹³ having been closed on 15 April.⁹⁴ Perhaps it was hoped that, by giving the monks and nuns spaces in which to practice their religion, they would be less motivated to join any protests or secret masses planned by non-juring lay-folk. In theory, the Théatins remained available for hire by non-jurors, but it was not until 2 June 1791, the day of the Ascension, that another service was to be held there, provoking full-blown iconoclasm.

As with the first, the second confrontation at the Théatins was a three-way affair between non-juring and pro-juring Parisians and the secular authorities. The pro-juring attackers were still convinced that non-juring priests ought not to be allowed to exercise any public function, an interpretation of the law that had been reinforced by the press reports of the first attack. Prudhomme, in *Révolutions de Paris*, had argued that non-juring assemblies were a counter-revolutionary threat. He declared that, "The Directory [of the Department of Paris] cannot ignore that the adherents of refracting priests who want to form a schism with the Gallican church are reuniting to trouble the established order, to overturn the constitution."⁹⁵ Pancemont was explicitly referred to as being one of the "hottest partisans of despotism and aristocracy". In *Révolutions de France et Brabant* the first Théatins assembly was described in similar terms as "alarming timorous consciences, enflaming the ardent and superstitious imaginations of a credulous sex, distributing with the same hand the agnus Dei, the rosaries, the blessings and the knives!".⁹⁶ Yet, on 11 April, the Directory of the Department of Paris had said that the police must distinguish between those who are meeting peacefully to exercise their cult and those who "under this pretext, are assembling with criminal views and to form factious coalitions against the establishment of the constitution".⁹⁷ Given, the authorities' intervention during the first

⁹³ A. P. P, AA. 134, no. 12.

⁹⁴ Ibid., nos. 14 & 15.

⁹⁵ *Révolutions de Paris*, number of 16–23 April 1791.

⁹⁶ *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, number of 25 April 1791

⁹⁷ La Croix op cit, series 2, vol. 3, pp. 562–564 & n. 1.

confrontation, it was clear that they thought that Pancemont and the non-jurors only intended to exercise their cult. The authorities were attempting to distinguish between religious and political questions of legitimacy, yet many Parisians were not recognising this separation and, as a result, thought the authorities were siding dangerously with the non-jurors.

The municipality was in an extremely sensitive position, seeking to avoid alienating one faction or the other. On 4 May 1791, the procurer of the Commune sought to placate pro-juring critics by giving official approval to the re-signification of the Quai des Théatins, already a *fait accompli*.⁹⁸ The Marquis de Villette had put a sign up on a house that he owned on the *quai*, it read "Quai de Voltaire". In a letter to the municipality he said that this measure was justified because "We will always have a Voltaire, and we will never again have the Théatins", the community of monks having been disbanded after nationalisation.⁹⁹ Thus, the non-juring connotations of the space of the *quai* were de-signified. In this context, the non-jurors' assembly on 2 June must have seemed even more inappropriate to self-proclaimed "patriots". The non-juring society was clearly concerned that there would be trouble if it met as planned and, on 1 June, the priest Jardinet and Mme de Noailles, the wife of Lafayette, requested that the municipality provide them with protection. But the second substitute-adjutant of the procurer of the Commune declared that all citizens were under the "safeguard of the law" and that there was no need to submit to this request.¹⁰⁰

On 2 June 1791, according to the *Moniteur Universel* (4 June), a group of people gathered on the Quai de Voltaire to protest that non-juring priests were giving communion, and therefore performing an illegal public function.¹⁰¹ The National Guard arrived with Lafayette at their head. He set about persuading the crowd that, following the lead of the Commune, the National Assembly had enshrined "freedom of the cults" in law, on 7 May, and that communion was not a "public function" at all. It seems that most of the crowd was convinced by this argument and left the *quai* peacefully reassured the Constitution was not being breached. Quite what happened next varies from report to report. The *Journal de la Municipalité de Paris* (5 June 1791) said that a group of around twenty men returned in the afternoon, burst in at the end of a service, smashed the altar

⁹⁸ Ibid., series 2, vol. 4, p. 122.

⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 128–129.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 466.

¹⁰¹ M. Lefebvre d'Arle, a national guard, said he had gone to the Théatins at 9 a. m. and found many individuals making incendiary propositions. He had tried to dissuade the people from their protest. A. P. P., AA. 148, no. 21.

and “broke the chairs and caused a lot of disorder”. It was this moment in the confrontation that was depicted in a print from the *Révolutions de Paris* (fig. 21). In the middle-ground of the image, about a dozen men can be seen prising the balustrade from its position, presumably before setting to work on the altar. On the left of the composition agitated people try to leave through an open door. On the right, a priest (perhaps Pancemont) addresses another group of people, some of whom engage him in argument, threateningly raising sticks towards him. In the foreground, a note of sympathy is introduced by showing a woman kneeling, pleading that the profanation be stopped. But she is dressed as an aristocrat; in this way the sympathy is qualified. The distribution of light in the print makes it clear that the iconoclasts’ behaviour is “enlightened”, while the non-jurors are mostly huddled in the shadow of “fanaticism” in the right foreground, or else they are fleeing the light. Non-juring representations of the attack were more critical of the attackers. Barruel heightened the drama of his version of events by somewhat enlarging the crowd. He claimed that, “soon groups that the instigators called *le peuple*, even though *le peuple* consisted of some hundreds of rough, frenzied individuals who had been bribed, formed outside and inside the church. Atrocious propositions, imprecations, menaces against the priests and the audience were the first hostilities. However, the service was reduced by prudence to a low-mass, some moments after which the balustrade was broken and the altar over-turned”.¹⁰² He added that later in the evening, when another effort was made to celebrate mass, this time witnessed by the symbolic presence of the mayor, “the seditious individuals destroyed the *affiches* of the department and detached the inscription and burnt it amidst cries of joy”. Barruel used the same language of criminality to condemn the pro-jurors that they used to condemn non-jurors. However, a popular pamphlet, “Les fameuses vèpres des Théatins”, took a rather different line.

The anonymous author took a clearly pro-juring position precisely by emphasising the peaceful legality of the protest that occurred during the morning of 2 June. He claimed that the afternoon attack on the contents of the building, including the altar, had actually been ordered by the non-juring priests themselves, who were seeking to bring pro-jurors into disrepute and represent the non-jurors as being, “pursued, persecuted...new martyrs”. The pamphlet’s view can be seen as a precursor of the “vandal plot”, postulated by the Abbé Grégoire in his later reports on “vandalism” – touchstones of post-Thermidorian discourse on the Terrorist period.¹⁰³ Like Grégoire, the anonymous author

¹⁰² Barruel op cit, vol. 3, p. 223.

¹⁰³ For discussion of the “vandal plot” see Baczko op cit.

saw legitimate revolutionary action as being characteristically rational, reasonable and civilised; a good pro-juring activist would not be so irrational as to attack an object of cultural value, which warranted protection from such uncivilised impingements on its physical integrity. Holding such views, and facing evidence that revolutionary activists had carried out just such an attack, the author postulated the existence of a (counter-revolutionary) iconoclastic plot, created to sully the reputation of honest and civilised pro-juring revolutionaries. Implicit in this position is a conception of the autonomy of certain cultural objects from worldly conflict which, as was shown above, was at odds with the crowd's assessment of the value of Catholic objects in religious terms. The author's political position might have been close to those of the protestors of the *quai*, but his cultural convictions regarding the inviolability of art were rather closer to those of the authorities and academic discourse. The result was a convoluted, apologist effort to explain an iconoclastic attack by arguing that true revolutionaries could not have been responsible, implying that it must have been non-jurors whose beliefs marked them out as irrational and uncivilised like iconoclasts.

Yet, all of the reports actually appear to have been rather inaccurate when compared to the evidence given to the local section's police commissioner. Jean Laurent, a mason who had been working in the church at 10 a.m., stated that he had seen "many people very calmly remove all the ornaments of the altar, there was no tumult".¹⁰⁴ Thus, the attack seems to have occurred earlier in the day than was reported, as well as being rather less dramatic. Laurent added that there were less than 60 people assisting in the mass, among whom was a woman who said she was astonished that this communion was being administered in this place which was not a parish church. Then another woman and some children of 9 or 10 years old "lifted up the steps of the altar and overturned it". He ended by saying that no more than ten people were involved and he did not know any of them. If his testimony is to be believed, then the iconoclasts were not a group of between 20 and a hundred men, but women and children. Furthermore, the attackers had been inside the church from the start of the ceremony, waiting for the moment when the priest began to fulfill what they perceived to be an illegal public function. More evidence, offered by Michel Marchaux who lived in the Théatins nationalised buildings,¹⁰⁵ corresponds with Laurent's statement, saying that in the chapel behind the choir in the Théatins there were, at the moment when the tumult began in the morning, many women

¹⁰⁴ A. P. P., AA. 148, no. 21.

¹⁰⁵ It is possible that he was one of the workers involved in alterations to the nationalised building being carried out for its new owner. Details of this and of the removal of the remaining nationalised goods, can be found in A. P. P., AA. 148, nos. 26, 31 & 34.

and children of 9 or 10 years of age who mutilated the trestles and table used by the officiating priest.¹⁰⁶ It seems that these women and children had concealed themselves in the chapel and emerged to overturn the altar and its ornaments at the signal of the pro-juring woman in the congregation gathered in the nave. The prominent role of women in the protest could be explained by their belief that they were less likely to face harsh punishment than their men-folk if the National Guard intervened and made arrests.¹⁰⁷ The underplaying of the women's role, in the reports of the confrontation could be attributable to editors' concerns over women's involvement in political violence, the kind of activity that they did not wish to encourage. It served the purposes of pro-juring and non-juring publicists to report the confrontation as being on a rather grander scale than it had in fact been.

Women and children were able to over turn the altar because it was only makeshift. Early in the afternoon of 2 June 1791, the municipality sent Blondel and Deleville to investigate the problems in the Théatins. They declared that on arriving they saw a heap of wood that they thought to be "the debris of a portable and lightly constructed altar". They requested that the architect Berdault join them, he agreed that the wood was from an altar that had been raised on two steps, with two tiers and a niche on top.¹⁰⁸ The local section, in the meantime, had sent for a carpenter, called Mansu, to come and "re-establish" the altar. All these men waited in the church until 3:30 p.m. when the workers declared their work complete, apologising that there was insufficient time for them to build the tiers for the crosses.¹⁰⁹ In fact, the non-jurors had been furious when, on 27 May, they discovered that the Théatins had been entirely emptied of all mobile goods. M. Taillandier, who visited the church on behalf of the non-jurors on that date, declared to the local police commissioner that there were no altars, paintings, *boiseries*, confessional boxes, pulpit or chairs, in short, none of the objects that it was his right to find there. The police went to the Théatins with him and agreed that the altar had been stripped and that "The building was in a state of absolute nudity".¹¹⁰ Hence, on 2 June, the *société particuliere* had no choice but to use a temporary altar that was readily over-turned along with the ornaments they had brought for the ceremony. The confusion over the décor of the church is interesting because it shows the lack of communication between different administrative

¹⁰⁶ A. P.P, AA. 148, no. 21.

¹⁰⁷ This is a line of argument that has been used to explain the prominent role that women traditionally played in subsistence riots. Cynthia A. Bouton, "Gendered Behaviour in Subsistence Riots; the Flour Wars of 1775, *Journal of Social History*, 23, 1989-1990, pp. 735-754.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ A. P. P., A.A. 148, no. 20.

organisations. In fact, the church had been emptied of all its mobile goods on 20 April, just days after the first confrontation outside the Théatins.¹¹¹ The work had been ordered by the municipal Administration of Nationalised Goods and supervised by a member of the local sectional committee, perhaps because they feared an iconoclastic attack on the church's contents.

However, the miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary had not been removed by the authorities, but by a certain *Père Thibaudier*.¹¹² Almost certainly a non-juror, this cleric evidently feared for the safety of the statue following the events of 17 April 1791. Indeed, given the outbreak of iconoclasm in the church in June, his fears would appear to have been well founded. If the statue had been present it would almost certainly have been damaged too. It is impossible to know precisely what happened to the statue once it was taken away, but it is very likely that Thibaudier used it in a private chapel or oratory. In other words, he moved it to a space where it could continue to function religiously, in safety. The sculpture was made of wood and, therefore, it had little material value. Equally, the secular inventory of the church described the piece as a "bad gothic Madonna", so it was judged to be of neither aesthetic nor historical value. As such, the authorities were willing to surrender a worthless object to a non-juror. Thus, it can be said that both the secular authorities and the non-jurors feared for the safety of imagery within non-juring spaces, but on different grounds.

Thibaudier was far from being alone in his desire to preserve non-juring imagery from feared attacks and from inappropriate uses. No doubt the events of the 1791 *Fête Dieu* heightened such concerns. On 23 June 1791, the festival took place with great pomp despite the flight of the king to Varenne just three days previously. But news of the king's departure had only served to underline the connection that many pro-jurors perceived to exist between non-jurors and counter-revolutionary sympathies.¹¹³ After all, the king had been trying to reach his non-juring confessor on 17 April, were not all non-jurors as lacking in patriotism as this absentee monarch? The Sulpician seminarists were certainly regarded as politically suspicious. In fact, their retreat at Issy was one of the

¹¹¹ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 3, Doc. 4536.

¹¹² Stein op cit, p. 71. I have tried to find other references to this cleric, without success. He features in neither the F7 series of the Archives Nationales (lists of arrests) nor in the Police Archives.

¹¹³ The secular revolutionary authorities attempted to control criticism of the king, relating to his flight. On 16 September 1791, the municipality's Department of Police ordered the removal from sale of all prints that were "injurious to the king or recalled his flight to Varenne". Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 2, Doc. 2467.

first places that the revolutionary authorities sought the king on 21 June.¹¹⁴ On 23 June, the seminarists, like most of the religious communities in the parish of St. Sulpice, refused to take part in the *Fête Dieu*, meaning that many of the procession's traditional stations were closed.¹¹⁵ The communities had failed a test of patriotism and, as a result, a small riot took place at the gates of the seminary when the gates were found to be barred.¹¹⁶ This was further proof of the illegitimacy of the non-jurors. As a pamphlet of 1791 put it, civil authority rules over that which concerns "public order" in the "present life", "the rights [...] of churches to have external confessions, to have public processions, to carry the sacraments with pomp and ceremony, depend on civil power because these objects are directly of interest to public order". Non-jurors were denying the secular authorities these rights.¹¹⁷

Emery, the head of the seminary of St. Sulpice, realised that the attacks at his gates, as well as those on the Théatins, indicated that the religious objects under his guard would not be safe if rioters broke in. Hence, his decision to put a daring and illegal plan of private preservation into practice. Firstly, he made up an inventory which did not include the art, relics and manuscripts he was removing, so that if an official search was made there would be little chance of their absence being noticed.¹¹⁸ He then made contact with his cousin, the Marquise de Villette, famed for her friendship with Voltaire, who had called her "the beautiful and the good". Following the death of Voltaire, Emery had led the Marquise back to the faith. During 1791, she remained a non-juring Catholic, participating in secret masses. She had a house adjoining the seminary and allowed Emery to move his precious goods into it. They remained there until 1793, when it was thought the house might be searched. Following the death of Voltaire, the *philosophe's* house on the Quai des Théatins had been left to the Marquise and her husband.¹¹⁹ A rumour had spread around Paris that Voltaire had asked that the house remain undisturbed for forty years after his death. The Villettes knew the rumour to be unfounded but chose not to counter it. The Marquise agreed to allow Emery to move his covert collection of art and relics into the property, knowing that the revolutionary authorities' respect for

¹¹⁴ Gosselin op cit, pp. 249–250.

¹¹⁵ La Croix op cit, Series 2, vol. 4, p. 559.

¹¹⁶ Gosselin op cit, pp. 262–263.

¹¹⁷ Anon, "Adresse à tous les français" op cit, p. 23.

¹¹⁸ Emery was ordered to make an inventory of the seminary's goods by the CPI in August 1791. Jean Stern, "Belle et Bonne, une fervente amis de Voltaire (1757–1822)", Paris, 1938, pp. 159–160.

¹¹⁹ It was, in fact, on the corner of this house that the Marquise's husband had posted the sign reading "Quai de Voltaire". Given this fact and the involvement of the Marquis in the Pantheonisation of Voltaire's remains, it seems that he was unaware that his wife had a rather different view of religion to his own.

Voltaire would rule out inspection or sacking of the house on, what was now known as, the Quai de Voltaire. It was there that the objects remained until the Marquise' died and Emery moved these nationalised goods, under cover of the dark, distributing them around the houses of several trusted non-jurors.¹²⁰

Emery also took additional risks to save a relic, "The Bed of Saint Charles", from the convent of Minimes in the Place Royale. When the nationalised building came up for sale in mid-1791, he managed to gain entry and bribe a civilian guard to help him locate the object, which had been hidden under an altar by the departing nuns. He then concealed the relic in his carriage and took it back to his parish, where he stored it at a non-jurors house.¹²¹ If the criticism, written by François Jacquemart, of the Minimes' new owners is to be believed, then Emery acted in the nick of time. Jacquemart wrote, in early 1792, "One has regrets for the beautiful objects of the church of the Minimes. The dilapidation caused by the ignorance and the sordid avarice of the vile owners of the building are consuming the ruins of monuments which honoured both their artists and the buildings where they *were* conserved" [my italics].¹²² For Emery, the significance of the objects he saved was principally based on their religious value to non-jurors. His fear for the objects' safety was based on his recognition that pro-jurors perceived them as no longer having such religious value; potentially the objects could be the foci of negligence or iconoclastic attacks. The only alternative to hiding the objects was to allow them to be officially preserved by the secular authorities. Even if the authorities had deemed the objects to be of sufficient aesthetic or historical value, which Jacquemart's comments suggest they might have done, once secular preservationist action was finally taken it would still have resulted in compromising the religious value of the objects. That is to say, the objects would have been moved to profane spaces where their religious use would have been ruled out by the buildings' secular functions. Emery's political and religious convictions contrasted starkly with those of the crowd that hanged the statues of the Virgin and overturned the Théatins' altar. Yet, in his habitual mode of receiving religious art he had more in common with them than he did with the secular authorities.¹²³

Many non-jurors went to considerable lengths to preserve miraculous statues in a "working environment". For example, when the religious community housing Notre-

¹²⁰ Gosselin op cit., pp. 263-264.

¹²¹ Ibid, pp. 263-264.

¹²² François Jacquemart, "Remarques historiques et critiques sur les Abbayes, Collégiales, Paroisses et Chapelles supprimées dans la ville et faubourgs de Paris, d'après le décret de l'Assemblée Constituante du 11 février, 1791, Paris, 1792, p. 265.

¹²³ Ibid., pp. 263-264.

**PAGE
MISSING
IN
ORIGINAL**

whose orders they were removing the goods. The servants replied that they worked for Mme la Marquise de Vibrage and that Abbé Bocquart from the St. Roch community had opened the cupboard containing the objects. The commissioners then listed the objects in detail and compared the list to one that dated from before the revolution and proved Vibraye's ownership.¹²⁹ As it transpired, Vibraye's removals might have been quite prudent, given that, on 15 August 1791, Delsart discovered that the processional banner of the patron saint had been subject of an attack in St. Roch. In fact, the "attack" was a kind of incidental act of iconoclasm that resulted from a bizarre theft.¹³⁰ The image of the saint was left in the baptismal chapel but the "drapery had been cut with a knife" from its backing.¹³¹ Perhaps the image was left in place due to the thieves' fear of its power.

The likes of *un particulier* arrested in the Luxembourg Section, on 28 June 1791, would no doubt have sympathised with removals and preservations, especially given the apparent dangers that religious art faced. He had claimed, within earshot of a National Guard on duty outside St. Sulpice that "they have destroyed more than 100 churches, there is no longer religion in France".¹³² Pro-jurors, on the other hand, were angered by attacks on constitutional national goods, but also by their illegal removal or preservation. For example, on 13 April 1791, a man and wife, called Coutheval, declared to the police commissioners of the Section du Luxembourg that they had seen six silver chandeliers, a silver cross and some other religious ornaments on a commode in a nearby house. They were reporting a secret chapel in the home of a man called Jacquart, where catechism was being given by non-juring Sulpician seminarists who had thought it "prudent" to move the goods from the chapel of catechisms.¹³³ Judging from the police records, it seems that the Couthevals were concerned that the chapel might be being used by non-jurors using goods that belonged to the nation. Nevertheless, the lack of a police response seems to suggest an official decision that the goods were either owned privately by the priests or that they were not worth further alienating non-jurors over. The police commissioners of the Section de la Fontaine de Grennelle showed less patience when, in August of the following year, they found nationalised goods from one of the Carmelite communities, concealed in the house of a M. Soyecourt; he was obliged to surrender them all.¹³⁴ By the

¹²⁹ A. P. P., AA. 83, no. 77.

¹³⁰ Thefts of personal goods also continued in St. Roch in 1791. In many respects, a church was an ideal location for a thief to operate because his/her victims were often immersed in prayer and/or contemplation, unsuspecting of the potential danger. For examples of thefts in St. Roch, see: A. P. P. AA. 81, nos. 305 & 306, AA. 82, no. 114 & Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire", vol. 2, doc. 2317.

¹³¹ A. P. P. AA. 85, no. 258.

¹³² A. P. P., AA. 166, no. 11.

¹³³ A. P. P., AA., 166, no. 6.

¹³⁴ A. P. P., AA. 148, no. 83.

middle of 1792, attempts to placate non-jurors, to find compromises that might re-assimilate them into official discourse, were gradually being abandoned.

It seems that almost all the religious objects privately preserved by non-jurors came from nationalised buildings that had been closed, pending sale. There are two very obvious reasons for this. Firstly, as noted above, non-jurors regarded functioning juring spaces as religiously illegitimate. As such, the contents of the churches were the focus of idolatrous attention, they had been profaned because of a re-signification of their use and that of the spaces as pro-juring, as locations where elections for constitutional clergy took place and as meeting places for pro-juring sectional committees. While the objects could have been re-consecrated by non-juring priests, problems with their actual removal made this impractical. This point leads us to our second explanation, namely that functioning constitutional churches were under the surveillance of the committees that used them, of secular church wardens, of pro-juring worshippers and of National Guards often posted at their doors. Arrest for theft was a realistic possibility if one tried to remove goods from functioning churches.

Yet, if we consider the burial of Mirabeau, we see that it was not only non-jurors who could disapprove of the novel use of constitutional churches for secular purposes. Certainly, non-jurors were, unsurprisingly, opposed to the Pantheonisation of Mirabeau. The author of one pamphlet described the very creation of the Pantheon, in the ex-church of Ste. Geneviève, as being a “diabolical suggestion” made by a “fanatical cabal” – remarkably similar language to that used by pro-jurors to condemn non-jurors.¹³⁵ He said Mirabeau was a “precursor to the anti-Christ”, that to place his body in the ex-church was “sacrilege”¹³⁶ and he called for the Virgin Mary to intercede to convert pro-jurors and *philosophes*.¹³⁷ The funeral service held in St. Eustache, on 4 April, before Mirabeau’s body was transferred to the Pantheon, could have caused equal offence to people even if they had no particular opinion on religion. After all, ceremonies like Mirabeau’s funeral were highly politicised and there was not, by any means, a universal consensus of opinion that Mirabeau was a *grand homme* deserving of Pantheonisation. For example, in 1790, many of the people from the Palais Royal section had complained vigorously that a “cabal of aristocrats” was assembling in a house on the rue Royale. Crowds gathered daily until the club finally agreed to disband. This secretive and armed society was said to

¹³⁵Anon, “Amende honorable à Dieu et Sainte-Geneviève”, Paris, 1790, p.2.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

be fermenting counter-revolution and Mirabeau was thought to be among them.¹³⁸ It is hard to believe that the society's opponents would have thought the St. Eustache ceremony or the Pantheonisation appropriate. It is also unlikely that they would have valued the presence of the bust of Mirabeau that was placed in St. Eustache on a stone from the Bastille, signifying Mirabeau's revolutionary importance.¹³⁹ Certainly, conservatives with reservations about reform *per se* had little truck with Mirabeau. One such writer attacked Mirabeau, in a pamphlet of 1791, by pouring scorn on his bust in St. Eustache and comparing both the sculpture and its subject unfavourably to those of an old royal general, de Chevert, also in the church.¹⁴⁰ Equally, pro-jurors could be offended by such ceremonies and images on religious grounds, even if they had no political objections. For example, a man was arrested for shouting "down with bayonets" as the National Guard entered St. Eustache for Mirabeau's funeral, probably because he thought raised bayonets were inappropriate in the house of God.¹⁴¹ Others complained about the ceremony on the grounds of their connoisseurial concern and/or fears for public safety, raised by the National Guards' firing of a volley of musketry in St. Eustache. Bailly, who had been too ill to be present, wrote to Lafayette to complain that a "citizen had been gravely injured" when the fusillade broke masonry off the walls.¹⁴² Such spectacles were subsequently banned in churches by the municipal council on 11 April 1791, effectively ending a short-lived genre of official, albeit accidental, iconoclasm.¹⁴³

What is more, pro-juring clergy often shared non-jurors' concerns over the sale, destruction or secular preservation of religious objects, but from nationalised churches. For example, on 22 October 1791, the *curé* of St. Eustache requested that the municipality allow him to move the master altar, its canopy, some "accessories" and the grill from the choir of the *ci-devant* church of St-Jean-en-Grève. He made a similar request for the pedestals and marbles from the grand altar of the *ci-devant* church of St-Louis-de-la-

¹³⁸ A. P. P., AA. 81, nos. 109, 110, 113, 138.

¹³⁹ It is possible that Palloy provided the bust and stone. Palloy did write a description of a ceremony that he and his "apostles of Liberty" held in the church following their return from the provinces in May 1791. Palloy, "L'Épitaphe de Mirabeau, placée en l'église Saint-Eustache, le 12 mai 1791, jour auquel les apôtres de la liberté de M. Palloy, de retour de leur mission dans les 82 départements, ont fait célébrer un service funèbre à la mémoire de ce grand homme", Paris, 1791. Busts of Mirabeau have raised an unresolved problem in my research. Given that Mirabeau fell from revolutionary favour in 1792, it seems likely that his busts subsequently became the foci of iconoclastic attacks. Yet, I have not found a single reference to such events.

¹⁴⁰ D.... d' Amiens, "Réflexions en vers sur un buste de M. le comte de Mirabeau soutenu d'une pierre de la Bastille, placé dans l'église de St. Eustache, et servant de pendant à celui de M. de Chevert", Paris, 1791.

¹⁴¹ A. P. P., AA. 134, no. 11.

¹⁴² La Croix op cit, series 2, vol. 3, p. 426.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 537.

Culture-de-Ste-Catherine. The plan was to install all of these objects in St. Eustache once permission was granted.¹⁴⁴ Clearly, by moving the objects to a functioning Catholic space, it was hoped to prevent the secular authorities from selling them, preserving them in a non-religious location, or allowing for their officially sanctioned iconoclasm if they were metal and melted down. By agreeing to the *curé*'s request the municipality were signaling their awareness of the religious value of the objects.¹⁴⁵ However, the CoM had a different agenda that was less concerned about keeping influential clergymen happy. The CoM wrote to the municipality, on 29 January 1792, to say that one of Lemoine's masterpieces, *The Baptism of Christ by St. John*, which had been accorded to the *curé* of St. Eustache, should occupy a "distinguished place" in the museum planned for the Louvre. They argued that the sculpture should be transported without delay to the commission's depot.¹⁴⁶ The municipality had little choice but to agree because they were facing a barrage of criticism for their management of nationalised spaces. The CoM had already complained, during its meeting of 6 December 1791, that sculptures in the former church of the Grands-Jésuits were of the highest value and ought to be removed immediately. In the meantime, they said the monuments should be surrounded by barriers to defend them from the accidents to which they were exposed. They added that the church had become a shop that was open to workers and other people who people who were "less than indifferent to the conservation of the master-pieces of art".¹⁴⁷ Given that this was a building under the control of the Administration of Public Works, it was the municipality's workers who were being blamed for allowing the neglect of representational objects. As early as January 1791, Godelart, procurer of the Feuillants, wrote to the Directory of the Department to say that the demolition and removal of the marbles and bronzes of various monuments erected in the chapels, and especially that of the Rostaing family, was reducing precious objects to nothing.¹⁴⁸ He actually blamed workers employed by the CoM and their depot for these "abuses" but, as these bodies were quick to point out, the workers were actually employed by the municipality. Godelart claimed that these workmen were betraying the trust of their employers by selling parts of bronze monuments to boilermakers! The CoM was no doubt especially displeased that the actions of municipal workers were bringing their commission into

¹⁴⁴ Lacroix op cit, series 1, vol. 7, p. 306.

¹⁴⁵ They had also agreed, on 24 March 1791, to allow Denoux, *premier vicaire* of Notre-Dame, to take a large *soleil* and two ciboriums from the suppressed church of the Madeleine-de-la-Cité. Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire", vol. 3, Doc. 3511.

¹⁴⁶ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 6 (number 3 of the Legislative Assembly), Doc. 2294.

¹⁴⁷ Louis Tuetey, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments: 1790-94", Paris, 1902-03, vol. 1, p. 61.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

disrepute when it had been making efforts to prevent the badly regulated sales of nationalised goods. For example, in May 1791, the Commission decided to pass on information to other authorities about a seller of paintings, who lived on the Quai des Théatins. He had sold four paintings, including works by Lebrun and Vouet, which he had acquired at a ridiculously low price from a sale of nationalised goods in Passy.¹⁴⁹ What is more, on 10 January 1792, the CoM decided it would have to verify all of the inventories of female religious orders already made by municipal officers because so many of the paintings were being stolen.¹⁵⁰ Implicitly, the municipality was to blame for failing to safeguard nationalised goods in the city. Considerable tension existed between constitutional priests, the CoM and the municipal authorities – they all valued representational objects in different ways.

The municipality and department of Paris were also being criticised by connoisseurs who were publishing pamphlets that condemned the workers involved in the nationalisation process. For example, François Jacquemart wrote a pamphlet, published early in 1792, that managed to combine his concerns for the lack of profit being made on sales of nationalised goods, the desecration of temples and the loss of art that he loved on aesthetic grounds. He placed the blame firmly on the secular authorities, declaring, “I have seen in a church a subaltern separated from his master, arranging ornaments while speaking in an tone of certainty about the repression of bells and of the fact that pieces of art will be next, be they painting or sculpture, which could be found there piled up one on top of the other. Why leave to the ignorant the duty of disposing of these objects; their silence on these matters would better hide their ineptitude. One must hope, if there is still time, that the National Assembly will correct all these abuses; that the Department will survey them, and that the Municipality is going to make a better choice of those it names for such work”.¹⁵¹ He also wrote that, “In the abbeys and monasteries precious monuments are destroyed [...] pieces of sculpture are taken in the hands of modern iconoclasts! Coats of arms and inscriptions are smashed, trampled under foot. [...] It was left to the free French of the eighteenth century to revive the Goths and the Vandals.” He went on to add that, “the voices of educated citizens are muffled by the clamor of foolish ones who know nothing but money. [...] Complaints are becoming useless and one can but moan that arbitrary despotism is decorating the honourable book of liberty. How many times have I confronted ignorance or malice while I have walked around the suppressed churches of

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 66, n. 1.

¹⁵¹ Jacquemart op cit, p. 197.

Paris? The God who resides in our temples has given his place over to property owners; the arrogance of one and the mockery of the others anger me to the point that I can hardly transcribe them. [...] It seems that under the specious pretexts of economy and the public good, the annihilation of religion and the majesty of its cult is sought. [...] So what is to become of the products of the sale of furniture and silver so scandalously taken from the suppressed churches?" Jacquemart used the damage being done to art to argue that the revolution was becoming that which it had sought to destroy: despotism. Furthermore, he pointed to the cupidity of people who wished to sell art whose material value was, in his opinion, out weighed by its aesthetic, historical and religious value. Like the author of the pamphlet about the second attack on the Théatins (noted above), Abbé Grégoire post-Thermidor and the condemnatory historians of "vandalism" Jacquemart saw a direct correlation between ignorant barbarism and the destruction of art.

The city's authorities were, however, caught in a difficult position, trying not to alienate groups of people who had very different expectations of them and the treatment of religious images. The municipality and Department of Paris had to comply with the nationalisation legislation, involving raising money through the sale and re-use of materials from churches – an agenda that privileged material value. Yet, they had priests pressing them for compromises and alienated non-jurors hiding objects illegally – both groups pursuing an agenda based on the religious value of art. The acceptance of some compromises, both over places of worship and pro-jurors' appropriation of some nationalised art, suggest the municipality agreed with Robespierre that it was best to avoid confrontations with the religious "prejudices so adored of the people".¹⁵² Then there was the CoM wanting to remove much religious art for preservation because of its historical and aesthetic value. Like the connoisseurs, the commissioners wanted other institutions to recognise that Paris was the cultural capital of the world where educated and enlightened men must save *objets d'art* for "France and for all the empire of letters".¹⁵³ As one of the commission's members, Doyen, wrote in January 1791, "in the movement of this revolution, this upheaval could well uncover and bring us closer to objects that have previously been hidden in the bosom of ignorance [i.e. Catholicism] and which dreamt of light".¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Robespierre made this statement in the Jacobins on 21 November 1791. Mona Ozouf, "Festivals and the French Revolution", London, 1988, p. 107.

¹⁵³ A. N., F17 1036A, "Détails sur le travail des Comités de l'assemblée" op cit.

¹⁵⁴ "Refléxions de M. Doyen soumise à Monsieur le Président et à Messieurs du Comité des Académiciens et Savants dont il a l'honneur d'être membre", A. N., F17 1036A.

The municipality and department of Paris were obliged to govern a society in which religious imagery had become a site for potential and/or actual conflict, be it the iconoclasm of the Théatins or the disagreements over how to preserve objects. The same could be said for those objects that bore “signs of feudalism”, that is to say coats-of-arms or titles. For example, how could the following positions be reconciled in 1791? An antiquarian, Aubin-Louis Millin, published a book in which he argued that monuments could “spur the curiosity of those who want to know the details of our history”, they could become, “one of the principal studies of our citizens”.¹⁵⁵ He went on to say that “statues and windows retrace the portraits of famous men, tombs recall the memory of their vices or their virtues”; this statement implicitly included feudal sepulchres that Millin valued on the basis of their pedagogic use.¹⁵⁶ But it is clear that many Parisians did not share this view, feudalism was not to be recalled; that was the whole point of destroying coats-of-arms, if feudalism was forgotten then history could not repeat itself, the revolution would be secured. Hence, on 19 May 1791, the *curé* of St. Eustache, Poupert, took a letter to the local police commissioners of the Section des Postes, which he had received the day before. It said, “I ask you the *curé* to warn the families who have titles and coats of arms in the chapels of the parish church to suppress them as soon as possible in execution of the decree of the National Assembly sanctioned by the king”.¹⁵⁷ The letter had a threatening tone, seeming to suggest that other measures would be taken, perhaps against the families or the objects, if the warning was not heeded. But, by giving importance to the erasure of “signs of feudalism”, the letter seems to share with Millin a Lockean understanding of the psychology of perception; a view that was common among educated eighteenth-century people. Mona Ozouf has described it thus, “For them, reflection never freed itself from sensation; and man defined by his quality of being, a being of sense, is led not by principles but by objects, spectacles, images [...] no intellectual operation was anything more than an extended or transformed sensation.”¹⁵⁸ Yet, the room for diverging views lay in the process of transformation. Would a sign recalling a discredited régime from the past be transformed into a mental impression of the system’s vice or virtue? Surely that would depend, to some extent, on the a priori prejudices of the viewer. But, in a society where images served so often as the foci for collective celebration or protest, is it surprising that some revolutionaries might have envisaged signs of feudalism sharing a similar function, leading them to fear the images

¹⁵⁵ Aubin-Louis Millin op cit, Paris 1791, p.2.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ A. P. P., A.A. 134, no, 16.

¹⁵⁸ Ozouf op cit, p. 203.

as foci for counter-revolution? Could the very process of education, postulated by Millin, be perverted by certain kinds of signs? Evidently, opinions on the matter varied.

As if this diversity of attitudes to images and their treatment was not difficult enough for the city's governors to handle, there was in addition a distinctly deist movement developing in some of the revolutionary clubs. Over the coming years their influence would become more and more widely felt in the sectional assemblies and eventually in the Commune. While their ways of thinking about imagery tended to privilege function over aesthetic value, they pointedly differentiated their treatment of images from that of Catholics. For example, when the *Société des Indigens* installed a bust of Rousseau in their meeting room, they declared that, "The homage that we render to you is far above the bombastic panegyrics by which a man of spirit is degraded while he basely kneels before an idol surrounded by incense".¹⁵⁹ Thus, while non-jurors and pro-jurors accused one another of idolatry, a new movement in the sections accused all Catholics of the same abuse. Yet, jurors and non-jurors alike would no doubt have accused the club of idolatry had they had heard the orator's polytheist assertion of the power of the bust. He said, "If, across the Styx, you can read our hearts, you will see us, like a new Pygmalion, invoke the gods so that they render strength and feeling to your statue. But what! The gods have heard us; they have permitted you to be revived among us! We can see you, we believe that we can hear you".¹⁶⁰ In the next chapter, we will see how some of these conflicting ways of thinking about images' value, diverging grounds on which to respect or disregard images' physical integrity, and tendencies to use imagery as foci for protests, became impossible for the secular authorities to reconcile. Somehow, the municipality, the department of Paris, and the National Assembly had to make and enforce their policy on the treatment of images while taking account of the diversity of positions discussed above. However, by the end of August 1792, and in response to popular revolutionary iconoclasm, the tendency of official discourse to privilege aesthetic and historical value of imagery had been seriously compromised. But before ending this chapter, we will first conclude it by placing some of its key points about religious imagery in the context of a broader historiographical debate.

¹⁵⁹ Vachard, "Installation de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, auteur du Contrat-Social, Dans la société des Indigens, amis de la constitution, séante rue Jacob, vis-à-vis celle Saint-Benoît", Paris, 1791, p.1.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 3. The orator also spoke of the "debris of awful despotism" left in the wake of revolutionary change; he used iconoclasm as a metaphor to help people imagine the revolution. Arguably, such language legitimised revolutionary iconoclasm. Ibid.

3.5 Conclusion

Oliver Christin has recently argued that the eighteenth century witnessed “the autonomisation of the artistic field and the transformation of images (tied up with a *cultuelle* or political function) into works of art (tied up with an aesthetic function)”.¹⁶¹ He describes this process as being “the emergence of an artistic field in which the [religious] image ceases to be that which Dupront has called sacralities, that is to say a sign, but also a relic, a fetish, a quasi-person from which Christians expect particular effects (protection, miracles, consolation) and becomes, above all, an object that one can judge, comment upon, transport, buy, collect, theorise about. The substitution of aesthetic pleasure for faith evidently leads towards the loss of interest in the purely religious subject of the tableau.”¹⁶² Yet, it is clear that Christin’s bold statements require serious qualification. As he recognises, his conclusions are reached through the analysis of a corpus of texts written periodically, over a 120-year period, on a specific set of religious paintings (the *Mays* in Notre-Dame de Paris). He argues that, over this period, the texts increasingly identified their audience as being *amateurs* or *connoisseurs* and, accordingly, exhibited the shift in emphasis characterised above.¹⁶³ Both Christin’s method and his argument raise important issues. Firstly, he focuses on large-scale history paintings and not all images with *cultuelle* or political functions. As such, he is making a sweeping statement about the transformation of the reception of images, based upon a very selective choice of objects. He is over-looking the vast majority of religious imagery extant in Paris: prints, cheap paintings, statues etc. Secondly, he is interested in the ways in which authors, writing about his focus-paintings, did so for a limited readership of *connoisseurs* and *amateurs* whose very labels distinguish them from the mass of Parisians who were less familiar with and concerned about aesthetic discourse. Broad conclusions about the transformation of the artistic field, leading to the autonomisation of aesthetic discourse, cannot be accurately drawn with sole reference to a minority of objects, their critics and their audiences.

In fact, this chapter has shown that, for many Parisians, the artistic field and aesthetic discourse were far from becoming “autonomised”; religious images were still very much tied up with both their *cultuelle* and political functions. Hence, the hanging of the Virgin’s statues at the Théatins, the *affiche*’s reference to the miraculous Virgin, the

¹⁶¹ Olivier Christin op cit, p. 75.

¹⁶² Ibid. p. 86.

¹⁶³ Ibid. p. 38.

over-turning of the altar and the ornaments and the efforts to hide religious art. Equally, reports of the use of suspected nationalised goods by non-jurors, while they could have been made by atheists or deists, indicate a thorough understanding of the on-going importance of the *cultuelle* function of religious images. Furthermore, such iconoclasm, preservation and reports of illegal usage all served to endow new political functions on religious objects that became resources in conflicts over politico-religious legitimacy. Christin has argued that, “the disqualification of the innumerable traditional devotions denounced as superfluous, untidy, popular, ignorant or even superstitious constitutes one of the most striking manifestations of the transformation of religious sentiment at the end of the seventeenth century. It is notably the case with ex-votos”.¹⁶⁴ I am not an expert on the late seventeenth-century religious history but this chapter has shown that ex-votos were still visible in churches and that part of their function, as signifiers of intercessionary efficacy, was almost certainly widely understood. Furthermore, in the previous chapter, it was shown that new forms of popular devotion were developed in response to revolutionary events. What is more, in chapter 5, we will show that leaving ex-votos around miraculous images was a practice that survived well into the revolution.

However, in emphasizing the *cultuelle* value of religious imagery to many Parisians, I do not wish to suggest that it is valid to think that they established the value of art exclusively in religious terms. The primacy of *cultuelle* and/or political values of Catholic art did not preclude Parisians from having an interest in the objects’ aesthetic value too. In fact, aesthetic value could serve as added *cultuelle* value, as a signifier of special devotion. Hence the dressing of cheap wooden statues of the Virgin Mary in ornate and expensive robes and crowns. On the other hand, an object like the miraculous Virgin in the Théatins could be described as “bad” on aesthetic grounds without its *cultuelle* value being undermined for its Catholic users. Nor did the emphasis that the makers of official inventories placed on the aesthetic value of religious art mean that their assessments were established on “autonomised” aesthetic grounds. For example, the list of the contents of Notre-Dame, compiled in November 1790, described a gothic bas-relief as being interesting despite the fact that it was “in barbaric taste”.¹⁶⁵ Such extra-aesthetic concerns had been expressed in an influential guidebook, used by CoM’ officials,¹⁶⁶ in its 1765 edition. It declared that, before it was replaced, the “barbaric taste” of St. Eustache’s

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁶⁵ A. N., F17/1261, dossier 2, no. 18.

¹⁶⁶ Piganiol de la Force, “Description Historique de la Ville de Paris et de ses Environs”, Paris, 1765. This guide is referred to in a letter written by Mercier for the CoM, probably in An II. A. N., F 17 1036A, dossier 6, no. 102.

portal “shocked the eyes”.¹⁶⁷ Implicit in such comments were judgements about objects’ positions in relation to a teleological view of history culminating in the civilisation of the Enlightenment, autonomised aesthetic judgements were not *de rigueur* even among *amateurs* and *connoisseurs*. Like the historians of so-called “vandalism”, they linked art and civilisation, subscribing to the kind of beliefs articulated by Barère in a speech given on 26 May 1791. He said, “The revolutions of barbaric people destroy all monuments and traces of the arts seem to be effaced, the revolutions of enlightened people conserve the arts, embellish them”.¹⁶⁸ Thus, it can be said that while different groups of revolutionaries established the value of art principally in terms of religious, political, material, aesthetic and/or historical value, nobody used one set of criteria in complete isolation and there was no “autonomised aesthetic discourse of art”.

All of the above points are of key importance to this study. It is essential to grasp the survival of residual modes of reception that valued art objects’ *cultuelle* and political functions, despite the emergence of the *more* autonomised discourse on aesthetics during the eighteenth century. If this thesis did not recognise such distinctions between residual and emergent practices, then it could not account for the tensions between groups and individuals who privileged the aesthetic, religious or political value of any given object at any given time. As a result, one would not fully understand iconoclastic and preservationist discourses, policies and actions; all of which developed, to a greater or lesser extent, in dialogical relationships with one another. In the next chapter we will see that, in matters of iconoclasm, *le peuple*, the major repository of residual modes of reception, could force the hand of the secular authorities, whose embrace of the emergent and *relatively* autonomised aesthetic discourse had, until that time, ensured that it had become legally dominant.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., vol. II, p. 206.

¹⁶⁸ Souchal op cit, p. 101.

Chapter 4

Official and unofficial iconoclasm, from the *ancien régime* until the end of 1792

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter we saw how religious sculptures came to be used as resources for public protest at the Théatins when the principal grounds for respecting them, as objects with religious value, were undermined by shifting discourses on religious legitimacy. In the first part of this chapter, we are going to focus on the treatment of statues representing kings. While one can argue that the statues of kings officially had a kind of religious value, it will be shown below that it is debatable whether or not late eighteenth-century Parisians subscribed to this view. Certainly, any religious value that kings and their representations were thought to have did not function in the same way as that of saints and their statues. Living kings were not saints, they could not be asked to appeal to God for heavenly intercession in worldly problems. As such, any comparison between the use of religious and kingly statues as resources for protest must recognise the different ways in which various types of sculpture had their value assessed by different people. Nevertheless, this chapter will show that some of the treatment of statues of kings, up to and during the revolution, like that of religious imagery, did not prioritise the aesthetic value of the object. Rather, many people gave priority to the statues of kings' political function/value as signs of sovereignty. I will argue that these sculptures acted as resources for public protest during the *ancien régime* and that this function did not end until the statues' destruction in August 1792.

In this chapter we will principally be considering the following statues of kings located in public spaces: the equestrian statue of Henri IV on the Pont-Neuf,¹ the equestrian statue of Louis XIII in the Place Royale,² the equestrian statue of Louis XIV in the Place Vendôme,³ the pedestrian statue of the same king in the Place des Victoires⁴ and the

¹ The sculpture was begun by Giambologna and completed by his colleague in France, Pierre Francaville who worked on the four slaves decorating the pedestal. Inaugurated in 1614.

² The figure was sculpted by Pierre II Briard and the horse was produced by Daniel Volterra in Rome. Inaugurated in 1639.

³ Sculpted by Girardon and erected in 1689.

⁴ Sculpted by Van der Bogaert, known professionally in France as Desjardins. Inaugurated in 1692.

equestrian statue of Louis XV in the *place* named after him.⁵ Later in the chapter we will also make reference to the pedestrian sculptures of Louis XIII⁶ and of Louis XIV⁷ on either side of the master altar in Notre-Dame. We will also briefly discuss the statues of various early French kings that were located in St. Germain-des-Près. However, in section 4.2, particular attention is going to be paid to the statues of Henri IV and Louis XV and their treatment during the *ancien régime*. By focusing on these two sculptures, it will be shown that specific statues of kings were used in subtly different ways as resources for protests relating to issues of sovereignty, legitimacy and monarchs' suitability to rule. This chapter will show that statues' treatment varied according to their themes, the ways in which they were represented and the location in which the sculptures were to be found. In relation to this last point, this chapter will occasionally draw on the argument developed in chapters two and three, that spaces' meanings are signified by their uses (planned and actual) and their signifiatory schemes (images and architecture). We will see that, even before the revolution, the imposed meanings of some spaces were resisted by people using them in ways that were not officially planned and also through the subversion of the spaces' signifiatory schemes, especially statuary.

Section 4.3 will focus on the treatment of the statues of kings during the revolution. By the end of the section, it will become clear that we can more fully understand the destruction of the statues of kings in August 1792, by appreciating continuities and changes in the ways in which such statues were used as resources for protest before and after 1789. It will be shown that gradually, during the course of the revolution, the statues of kings actually came to be used as a resource for protest not just against the monarchy but equally against the National Assembly as well. This point will also be discussed in section 4.4 along with the actual destruction of the statues, the ways in which the iconoclasm was represented in prints and the implications of the attacks on the treatment of all royal imagery in Paris. We will also see how royal imagery was used to mediate power struggles between different levels of revolutionary government after the fall of the monarchy. In section 4.5, after considering royalist reactions to the destruction of the statues of kings, the scope of the discussion will once again broaden to include Catholic imagery. The argument of chapter 3 will be extended to show that, by the end of August 1792, no simple consensus could be established between institutions, individuals or groups of people regarding the appropriate treatment of religious images *and* a growing

⁵ The horse and the figure of the king were sculpted by Bouchardon in the year of his death, 1762. Pigalle completed the allegorical figures for the pedestal from Bouchardon's plans. Inaugurated in 1763.

⁶ By Coustou l'ainé

⁷ By Coysevox

proportion of secular images. In part this situation was attributable to irreconcilable differences in religious and political opinion, but it was also related to the fact that different people, groups and institutions continued to value images according to different weightings of criteria. Once again, this argument will be exemplified through analysis of the tensions that existed between preservationist and iconoclastic discourses and activities, as manifested in words and actions. We will also show how prints and words disseminated knowledge of iconoclastic actions and legitimated them as a way of imagining and securing revolution and counter-revolution. We will explore how political, religious and cultural tensions focused on disagreements over the re-signification of spaces as being revolutionary, not only through the removal of signs thought to be non-revolutionary but also through the introduction of new revolutionary signs. Re-signification of spaces using revolutionary signs was problematic when people thought such secular impositions to be inappropriate.

This chapter has a key point to make about visual images. Namely that they use fixed codes to represent meanings to their audiences, but that words can be used to encode meaning in almost immediate response to events. As such, images' perceived meanings can become "out of step" with shifting discourses that relate to the images' themes. When such situations became particularly polarised, people were likely to be inclined towards iconoclastic actions if they did not consider the aesthetic and historical values of images to offer necessary or sufficient conditions to preserve representational objects. The rapid discursive shifts of the revolution and, in particular, the "polarisation" of religious and political opinions, meant that this potential for violence against images became a reality.

4.2 The treatment of statues of kings in Paris, during the *ancien régime*

On 21 June 1757, Louis XV issued the "Lettres patentes pour la Place de la Statue Equestre du ROI."⁸ The document declared that the king had agreed with "the deliberation taken by our dear and good Town of Paris, on 27 June 1748, holding that We could

⁸ F/13/312c, dossier 6. "Lettres patentes pour la Place de la Statue Equestre du ROI. Du 21 juin 1757"

permit them to transmit to posterity their zeal for our glory, the recognition and the love of our Subjects by a monument decorated by our equestrian statue, in such a form and in such an emplacement in this Capital as it pleases Us to ordain.”⁹ It was added that an area, known today as the Place de la Concorde, would be ceded to the city of Paris for “the public good and convenience of its inhabitants”.¹⁰ The *Prévôt des Marchands* would be allowed to establish a pedestal there ready to receive the planned statue. As Isherwood has shown, the vast new square with a royal statue at its heart was to be a part of a larger plan to turn the area from the Tuileries gardens to l’Etoile into leisure space for Parisians, encouraging the extension of the city westwards.¹¹ But, in effect, the square was on the current periphery of the city. As will be shown below, the issue of the sculpture’s position within the space of the city was to be used against the Crown by its critics. Importantly, like all statues of kings, the sculpture of Louis XV was officially a representation of a king who embodied sovereign power in France. As such, any comments about the statue could function as encoded comments about the king’s power. This chapter will show that the statues of Louis XV and other kings were to elicit many such responses from Parisians in the coming years.

Before the inauguration of the sculpture of Louis XV, the last statue of a king to be erected in Paris had been put up in the Place Vendôme and represented his predecessor, Louis XIV. Shortly after this sculpture had been erected, it became a focus for criticism of the king and in 1791 Dulaure described an early response to the monument. He wrote that, “The miserable [economic] state in which the people of France found themselves during the erection of this statue [...] led some bad jokers to place a *besace* on the shoulders of the statue of this great king”.¹² A *besace* is a kind of double sack with carrying pouches at both ends, worn by beggars or monks who had sworn an oath of poverty. Thus, to sling a *besace* over the shoulders of the king’s statue was to signify that he was a beggar, appealing for money from the people whose wealth he depended on, or a man sworn to a life of poverty – which, giving his reckless spending, he evidently was not. The intervention by the “bad jokers” used humour to re-signify the statue and mock its subject, the king. Perhaps, it was because Louis XV wanted to avoid this kind of criticism being directed at his new effigy that its funding came partly from the sale of portions of the ceded land to individuals and not from the state’s coffers.¹³

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Robert Isherwood, “Farce and Fantasy. Popular Entertainment in Eighteenth-Century Paris”, Oxford, 1986, p. 136

¹² Delaure op cit., p. 304.

¹³ “Lettres patentes” op cit.

Nevertheless, as soon as the sculpture emerged from storage to be moved to the new square the statue of Louis XV was met with derision, albeit not about economics. The inauguration day had been declared a feast,¹⁴ a gesture of generosity that, in encouraging drinking and merry-making, might have intensified the derisive response that the sculpture received. In February 1763, Barbier wrote in his diary about the reception of the monument, "On the 23rd of this month, the equestrian statue of the king was placed on the pedestal in the new square across from the Pont-Tournant of the Tuilleries. It took three days to transport the statue from the workshop at Roule. There was a great crowd to see the mechanics of this operation, supervised by a builder from Saint-Denis, a man of great skill. The governor of Paris, the *prevôt des marchands*, and the city fathers were under tents [with] Madame la Marquise de Pompadour, M. Le Duc de Choiseul, the Prince Maréchal de Soubise and others. But, as in a crowd there are always troublemakers and ill-intentioned people, it was reported that along the way and in the square several persons were arrested for proffering indecent remarks about why the statue was advancing so slowly. They were saying that the king was going along the way he was led; that they would have a hard time getting him past the Hôtel de Pompadour, that he had to be held up by four *grues* [cranes; prostitutes] to be lowered onto the pedestal, along with allusions to ministers and several other *mauvais discours*".¹⁵ Thus, a statue that was officially intended to mark the love of the king's subjects for their monarch became the butt of popular humour that poked fun at him and his mistress, his libido, his ministers and his lack of decisive leadership qualities. The statue was a locus of protest against the monarchy, provoking people who recognised a discrepancy between the sculpture's positive representation of the king and their own negative views of him. As a result, they used the statue as a focus for complaint about the monarch.

After the inauguration of the statue of Louis XV, words continued to be used to attack it and, thereby, the king himself. For example, almost immediately after the sculpture's inauguration, a popular song began to circulate around Paris, "Oh beautiful statue! Oh beautiful pedestal! The virtues are at the feet and the Vice is on the horse!"¹⁶ We can see from a contemporary print of the monument that four allegorical figures of women were

¹⁴Arlette Farge, "Fragile lives. Violence, Power, Solidarity in Eighteenth-Century Paris", Cambridge, 1993, p. 18.

¹⁵ Cited in Chartier op cit, p. 123.

¹⁶ Réau op cit, p. 317. As Réau rarely used footnotes, I am not able to say who first recorded this version of the song. However, despite the fact that I have not come across a contemporary reference to these cited lines, I am inclined to think that Réau had found such a reference because I have established a lot of supporting evidence for many of the facts he cites.

**PAGE
NUMBERING
AS ORIGINAL**

monarchs as well as their representations; a comparison that highlighted the relative unpopularity of Louis XV who was, ironically, officially called the *bien aimé* – the well-loved. Henri was among the people on the Pont-Neuf while Louis was distanced from them on the periphery of the city. What is more, Henri was a king who had lived in Paris, extending the Louvre to signify his allegiance to the capital. Like the song cited above, this *affiche* could have alluded to the fact that monarchs had, since Louis XIV, distanced themselves from their people by living in Versailles, a situation that was rectified when the market women of Paris brought the king back to Paris during the October Days of 1789. In addition, the *affiche*'s reference to hunting could be seen as making another spatial reference by connoting the proximity of l'Etoile, a departure point for hunting parties. However, it also made a more obvious point about the actual suitability of Louis XV for kingship and, in a way, offered an explanation for the position of the monarch in the hearts of his people. Louis XV was a famously keen hunter, but his success in "conquering forests" had not been matched on the battlefield, for which hunting was meant to be preparation. Thus, the opening lines of the poem, by alluding to the king's alleged ineptitude as a soldier, undermined the statue's representation of him in classicised armour, wielding a marshal baton. Popular dissatisfaction with the failures of Louis XV's forces during the Seven Years' War was evidenced by the use of his effigy as a focal point for derision. Furthermore, the poem implies that the pride of the "conqueror of forests" would prevent him from forsaking a hunting party to join his people in a country inn as Henri IV was represented as doing in Collé's play of 1766, "La Partie de chasse de Henri IV".²⁴ In this way Louis' aloofness was connoted, offering another explanation for his distance from the hearts of his subjects.

The location, subject matter and formal qualities of the sculpture were a code that critics of the monarchy could refer to when protesting their dissatisfaction. Thus, a statue that was meant to mediate the power relationship between a generous king and a grateful people, was actually acting as a medium for popular condemnation of a king who was widely regarded as a poor monarch. The *affiche* we have just discussed did not even mention the aesthetic elements of the statue, simply alluding to their inappropriateness. Attention was principally drawn to the failings of the sculpture's subject, in order to highlight a discrepancy between the official function of the sculpture and the way it actually

des Victoires". Cited in Jacques Hillairet, "Dictionnaire des rues historiques de Paris", Paris, 1966, p. 630.

²⁴ Robert Herbert, "Baron Gros's Napoleon and Voltaire's Henri IV" in Francis Haskell, Anthony Levi, Robert Shackleton (eds.), *The Artist and the Writer in France. Essays in honour of Jean Seznec*, Oxford, 1972, pp. 52–53.

functioned in the context of popular discourse. This prioritising of function over form is also indicated by the fact that *afficheurs*, who posted messages on the statue of Louis XV, do not seem to have been concerned that they were altering the aesthetic appearance of the object; indeed, that was part of the point.

It seems quite possible that some of the *affiches* posted on the statue of Louis XV were put in position by people attending the St. Ovid fair that was held in the square, or in the nearby Place Vendôme from 1767 until the mid-1780s (fig. 23).²⁵ The derisive humour that the *afficheurs* used to mock authority could be seen as being related to the laughter of the fair theatres that Isherwood has described so well.²⁶ No doubt the availability of alcohol at the fairs loosened tongues and encouraged risky schemes to re-signify the serious royal statue with amusingly subversive words. Eventually, a balustrade had to be erected around the effigy of Louis XV, in an effort to deter *afficheurs* and graffiti writers who, like the prostitutes, were hardly using the space of the square in the way that the authorities had envisaged. This was supposed to be a royal space that both represented and reinforced royal authority, the social practices within the space were certainly not meant to involve or encourage dissent. The statue was meant to impose official meaning on the space and not serve as a tool for undermining such meanings. As Arlette Farge has noted, the royal authorities considered it to be sedition to speak, sing or write critical words about the king – hence people were arrested during the inauguration of Louis XV's statue. In this context, one could argue that the Place Louis XV had become a kind of "seditious space" in popular life. Given the punishment of sedition with jail or forced labour on the galleys, the posting of *affiches* on the statue of Louis XV, while dangerous, offered certain advantages and disadvantages to people wishing to criticise the Crown. Considering these pros and cons will help us to grasp the practical reasons for the development of the unofficial function of Louis XV's statue as a resource for protest.

Affiches offered one very clear advantage to private individuals or groups that used them to express unofficial opinions publicly. While printed *affiches* were something that few people could afford to produce, hand-made versions could be made extremely cheaply; one only needed pen, ink, paper, paste and a basic level of literacy. It was precisely the low price of hand-produced *affiches* that made them perfect for advertising goods or services to potential buyers, or even as a medium available to a wife announcing to the

²⁵ Isherwood op cit, chapter 4.

²⁶ Robert M. Isherwood, "Entertainment in the Paris Fairs of the Eighteenth-Century", in *Journal of Modern History*, 53, no. 1, 1981, pp. 24–48.

quartier her anger with an errant husband.²⁷ Such signs were to be found all over Paris alongside their official counterparts. Low production costs were probably an attraction to those who posted derisive homemade signs on the statue of Louis XV; large-scale production was hardly required for messages that made most sense in only one location. In any case, to print such seditious text would have required excellent contacts with printers who were willing to risk the confiscation of their equipment and possible imprisonment for producing material that undermined “established authority”. Even if such printers could be found, could they be trusted? Another advantage common to all *affiches* was that they were less transient than spoken words, they would remain in front of their audience until someone pasted over them, ripped them down or blanked them out and they generated spoken words as news of the sign spread.

But the politically provocative content of the *affiches* posted on the statue of Louis XV meant that the medium and the site offered several other notable advantages. Firstly, the signs could be stuck-up under cover of darkness by one person approaching the square from the relatively rural Champs Élysées. The chances of being apprehended were minimal. Secondly, readers could approach the statue to study the messages without arousing suspicion. Ostensibly, the reader was fulfilling the role that officials expected them to play, gazing at the impressive monument while, in fact, they were actually contemplating a sign that derided both the sculpture and royal authority. In addition, the actual posting of the message onto the pedestal might have helped the *afficheurs* feel that they had appropriated the statue – participating in constructing a new meaning by changing the sculpture’s appearance. The direct contact between the seditious sign and a representation of its target probably added a certain *frisson* to the audience’s experience of reading forbidden words. After all, officially the body of the king was sacred *and* quasi-saintly, his image was meant to have similar connotations. In 1775, the Archbishop of Paris said of the king’s power, “The origin is none other than God himself; it is in the authority of God that that of kings takes its source; a king is an image of the divinity; sovereigns are the gods of the earth; independent of all created power, their crown can be removed by none other than the king of kings”.²⁸ To stick onto a statue of the monarch a message that questioned the king’s suitability to rule was, in terms of official discourse, not only sedition but also sacrilege. Such postings symbolically breached the sacred

²⁷ For a brief discussion of these kinds of uses for *affiches* see Arlette Farge, “Fragile Lives: Violence, Power and Solidarity in Eighteenth-Century Paris”, London, 1993, pp. 16–17.

²⁸ Hermann Weber, “Le Sacre de Louis XVI le 11 juin 1775 et la Crise de l’Ancien Régime”, p. 261 in *Le Sacre Rois. Actes du Colloque international d’Histoire sur les sacres et couronnements royaux (Reims 1975)*, Paris, 1985.

inviolability of the king's body, undermining respect for his legitimacy. Furthermore, the placard attached to a representation of the king's body connoted the signs that criminals were often obliged to wear when making honourable amends and on the way to the gallows.²⁹ Thus, the *afficheur* implied visually that the king was a criminal. The symbolic desecration of the statue of Louis XV had been even more overtly signified than it was by *affiches* when, following the Maupeou coup of 1771 it was smeared with excrement—the most base of profane materials.³⁰ Thus, the regular mistreatment of the statue could be said to have been both a reflection of and a contribution to the desacralising discourse on kings in this period.

The extent to which Parisians actually regarded the king as being sacred and quasi-saintly is a question that has been exercising historians for some time.³¹ Certainly, Louis XVI, like his forefathers, was crowned in Reims and his person was consecrated in a way similar to those of Bishops, but using oil that was said to have been brought from heaven to earth by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. Following Louis XVI's coronation, he laid his hands on 2,400 people suffering from scrofula, a disease that kings were supposed to be able to miraculously cure.³² Nevertheless, considerable skepticism about the divine locus of monarchical power is apparent in the writings of authors like Claude Martin de Marivaux, Louis Vincent Gietzmann de Thurn, and Bachaumont. They all argued that the king's sovereignty derived from the nation and not God.³³ As for the miraculous cures and the celestial oil, Louis-Sébastien Mercier claimed nobody believed in them anymore.³⁴ On the other hand, some people continued to subscribe, at least ostensibly, to the official line. The royalist Boyer de Nîmes, for example, in a book written about prints in 1792, declared that an image mocking Louis XVI's flight to Varenne was a "sacrilegious" attack on a "sacred person".³⁵ In this light, the posting of

²⁹ For example, on 15 March 1790, Pierre Curé was condemned for making "incendiary and seditious propositions, and proffering a criminal proposition against the Queen". He was sentenced to make honourable amends for three successive days outside Notre-Dame, wearing nothing but a shirt and a sign around his neck reading, "Seditious perturbator of the public peace". Tuetey op cit "Répertoire" op cit, Vol 1, Doc. 1347.

³⁰ Merrick op cit, p. 251. Merrick is citing Charles Thévenau de Morande, "Le Gazetier cuirassé", 1771, p. 90.

³¹ Chartier has dealt with this issue in his book, "The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution", op cit, pp. 110–136. One could also point to the work of Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, "Logiques de la foule. L'affaire des enlèvements d'enfants, Paris, 1750", Paris, 1988.

³² Weber, op cit, p. 265. Louis XV had touched only 1500 people at his coronation. Alphonse Dupront, "Sacre, Autorité, Pouvoir: profil d'anthropologie historique", p. 334, in "Le Sacre des Rois" op cit.

³³ Weber, op cit.

³⁴ Jeffry Kaplow (ed.) op cit, p. 267.

³⁵ M. Boyer-Brun, "Histoire des caricatures de la révolte des français. Par M. Boyer de Nîmes, auteur du Journal du Peuple. Tome premier", Paris, 1792, p.86.

affiches directly onto the image of the sacred king was clearly an intervention in a contentious and officially illegal debate about the king's sacredness and, therefore about his sovereign legitimacy as it was officially justified.³⁶ As such, it can be seen that the statue of Louis XV was used as a resource for protests about monarchical government *and* its relationship with Catholicism. The *affiches*, having undermined the monarchy's sacred legitimacy by compromising the inviolability of one of its images, also undermined its legitimacy in the terms of the secular discourse on the locus of royal sovereignty by pointing to the unpopularity of royalty among its subjects – the constituent parts of the nation. Unofficial *affiches* and spoken and sung words could rapidly encode these new discourses' meanings and, by making reference to the statue, highlight how out-of step the government was with public opinion. The statue's fixed code could not respond to such re-significations. Hence, long before the use of the statues outside the Théatins as resources for protest against authority, the statue of Louis XV had taken on the same function, albeit in relation to a different argument.

The statue of Henri IV (fig. 24) was treated in ways that were both similar to and different from the statue of Louis XV. Similar in that the treatment of Henri IV's statue implied engagement with a quasi-religious discourse about kings and used the statue as a resource for public protest. Different in that the statue's prototype was never a focus of derision, although the sculpture was used to criticise other kings. Henri was widely regarded as being the archetypal good king, brave and merciful in war, just and kind to his people, a king who famously made it his goal to put a chicken in the pot of every Frenchman. Henri had become, in Isherwood's words, "a folk hero [...] A symbol of benevolence and well being".³⁷ This popular conception of the long-dead king is apparent in an apocryphal story recounted by Mercier, describing a beggar appealing to a passerby for help. "In the name of St. Peter", said the beggar, "In the name of St. Joseph. In the name of the Virgin Mary. In the name of her divine son, in the name of God". No help was forthcoming. But as soon as the beggar tried a new invocation, "In the name of

³⁶ Given that hand written messages were left on pillars opposite the reliquary of Ste. Geneviève (and probably in many other churches as well), the *affiches* on the statue of the king might also have connoted some engagement with religious issues simply because of their format. Both kinds of messages were directed at the prototype of a nearby image and both were written by hand. The difference, of course, lay in the functions and contents of the messages. Those for the saint were pleas for intercession or thanks for assistance that bore witness to her power. Yet, those aimed at the king were derisive attacks that undermined his power at a site where the people's gratitude was supposed to have been permanently encoded by the monument. The *affiches* in Ste. Geneviève were described by Mercier. Jeffry Kaplow (ed.) *op cit*, pp. 264–266.

³⁷ Isherwood, *op cit*, p.3.

Henri IV. In the name of Henry IV?" he was given a gold Louis.³⁸ Such a story served to show the quasi-religious status that some Parisians afforded Henri IV, but also his exemplariness as a generous king.

The popularity of Henri IV's statue was, no doubt, partly due to its location as well as to the quasi-religious veneration of its subject. The Pont-Neuf was a major crossing point for trade between the two sides of the Seine and a place where street entertainers worked the crowds and all kinds of goods – from lemonade to songs – could be bought. The Pont-Neuf was a kind of market place, accessible to all. As Habermas pointed out, "The exchange of news develops along the path set by the exchange of goods" and where news is exchanged, opinions are formed.³⁹ An example of the statue's treatment in 1774 shows how the popularity, quasi-religious value and positioning of the statue of Henri made it a perfect resource for people wishing to disseminate opinions about important events to those who crossed the Pont-Neuf. Jeffrey Merrick has written that, "Not long after Louis XVI's accession to the throne in 1774, the word *resurrexit* appeared on the pedestal of the venerated statue on the Pont-Neuf. Within days another placard, quoting Henri IV's remark about 'la poule au pot' reminded Louis XVI what he must do to imitate the founder of the Bourbon dynasty."⁴⁰ Merrick argues that these *affiches* pertained to popular hostility to Louis XVI's refusal to dismiss Maupeou. However, the historian fails to clearly state what the word *resurrexit* means and what its connotations were in the context of its posting. These are important omissions because, in fact, the term *resurrexit* does not have the negative connotations that one would associate with hostility to the new king. Actually, the word "resurrexit" is the part of the Easter Vulgate when the priest says, "He has risen" and the congregation responds, "he is indeed risen". As such, the *affiche* had clear religious connotations for all Parisians who recognised the word *resurrexit* from their church going. The sign seems to have been drawing a parallel between Henri IV and Jesus Christ as saviours who had returned, pointing to Henri's quasi-religious importance. Thus the *affiche* appears to have been optimistically asserting that Louis XVI was the reincarnation of the ever-popular Henri IV. Like the priest during the Vulgate, the *affiche* invited its audience to respond to its declaration by saying, "he is indeed risen". The statue of Henri was being used to declare public support and high hopes for the new king.

³⁸ Kaplow, op cit, p.72.

³⁹ Benjamin Nathans, "Habermas's *Public Sphere* in the Era of the French Revolution", in *French Historical Studies*, 16, no. 3, 1990, p. 621

⁴⁰ Merrick op cit, p. 251. Merrick is citing from "Mémoires Secrètes".

However, this pro-monarchist use of the statues of kings was only to last until Parisians realised that Louis XVI was not as great a monarch as Henri IV was believed to have been. Some months after the original *affiche* was posted on the Pont-Neuf, another “*resurrexit*” sign was stuck to the pedestal of the statue of Louis XV.⁴¹ Louis XV had become most unpopular by the end of his reign and, as we have seen, his sculpture was well-established as a site for *affiches* that criticised the Crown; such *affiches* were appearing, in growing numbers, throughout Paris towards the end of his reign.⁴² The new “*resurrexit*” message was a declaration that Louis XVI was the resurrection of his detested grandfather and not of Henri IV. The presence of the *affiche* on the statue of Louis XV and its absence from the sculpture of Henri IV together signified the decline in the new king’s popularity. The established positions of Louis XV and Henri IV in popular discourse on kings (representing bad and good kingship respectively) meant that their monuments had specific functions to play as resources for protest in favour of and/or against the subsequent monarch, whose reputation was not yet fixed. The statues were not being used to protest against monarchy *per se* but against individual kings. Both sculptures had their appearances altered by the *affiches* posted on them and, along with the content of such messages, this seems to suggest that many Parisians thought of the statues principally in terms of political function rather than aesthetic value.

It needs to be said at this point that the statues of kings in Paris were not permanently at the forefront of peoples’ minds when they used spaces where such sculptures were visible. Much of the time the statues were not covered with *affiches* and songs about them were not *à la mode*. Rather, the statues had a kind of ambient presence. This was most obviously the case for the statues in the Place des Victoires and the Place Royale that were not popular leisure spaces and were not on the major routes of trade and news that crossed Paris. Furthermore, like the Place Vendôme, they contained statues whose subjects did not have the contemporary resonance of the paradigmatic good king Henri and the bad kings Louis XV and, increasingly, Louis XVI. But the sculptures of the Place Louis XV and the Pont-Neuf always had the potential to emerge from the ambient background of their spaces and be fore-grounded by word-based interventions. It was at times when kings’ policies were unpopular, or doubt was being cast over their legitimacy or suitability to rule that these statues were mobilised as resources to disseminate the messages of public protests. Sculptures that signified the king’s power over his subjects could be used to symbolically signify the power of the king’s subjects over him; a

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Chartier, “Culture populaire” op cit, pp. 255–257.

transferral of power to the sovereign people. Let us conclude this section by looking at a protest that took place in front of the Henri IV statue in 1788.

In May 1788, the finance minister, Brienne, attempted to side step the *parlements'* opposition to his fiscal reforms. When they opposed him, his colleague Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, repeated the Maupeou coup of 1771 and revoked the *parlements'* rights of remonstrance.⁴³ A wave of unrest spread through the provinces and, in August, both of the unpopular royal officials resigned.⁴⁴ The *basoche*, clerks from the Paris law courts, responded by using the nearby statue of Henri IV as a focus for a protest against the perceived inadequacies of Louis XVI's governance. The men gathered at the foot of the statue and burnt effigies of Brienne and Lamoignon, symbolically killing the ministers in a quasi-judicial execution.⁴⁵ Dubois, the captain of the guards posted on the bridge, ordered his men to disperse the crowd. But, when one of the guards fired on the crowd, the protestors rushed the soldiers' position and forced them to retreat from the bridge.⁴⁶ For the next day and night the crowd retained control of the Pont-Neuf and they forced everyone who passed by the statue there to shout, "Long live Henri IV!"⁴⁷ By constantly repeating this cry the crowd was pointedly failing to make the same declaration for their living monarch, Louis XVI. This omission was an insulting protest against Louis XVI, who had allowed his ministers to remove the powers of *parlements* that regarded themselves as being representatives of the people and whom many of the people saw as such. The crowd on the bridge used spoken words in conjunction with the statue of Henri IV to signify how far they felt Louis had strayed from protecting their interests and respecting their views. In doing so, the protesters undermined the current king's sovereign legitimacy in terms of his relationship with the will of the nation. Shortly after Louis XVI had ascended to the throne, the statue of Henri IV had been used to express popular hopes for the reign of the new king. Now the same sculpture was used to express disappointment.

Prints of the crowd calling on passersby to salute Henri IV often placed the statue prominently within the composition, emphasising the sculpture's function as a focal point

⁴³ E. N. Williams, "The Ancien Régime in Europe. Government and Society in the Major States 1648–1789", London, 1970, p. 240.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 241.

⁴⁵ Michel Vovelle, "La représentation populaire de la monarchie", in Keith Michael Baker (ed.), *The French Revolution and the creation of Modern Political Culture*, Volume 1, Oxford, 1987, p. 85. Vovelle is using Charon's "Lettres Historiques" as his source.

⁴⁶ L. M. Prudhomme, "Histoire impartiale des Révolutions", Paris, 1824, vol. 1, pp. 128–129.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

for the protest. For example, the print “Tous les soirs aussi, un groupe d’hommes mal vêtus, se portoit [sic] devant la statüe [sic] de Henri IV, et forçoit [sic] les passans [sic] à la saluer” (fig. 25) showed Henri almost exactly in the center of the image. In the right foreground, young men can be seen laughingly setting off celebratory firecrackers. To the left another man, looking happy, arrives to join in while, just behind him two men struggle to restrain the horses of a passing carriage. In the right middle-ground, a torch is held up to illuminate the face of an aristocratic lady who is about to be asked to dismount and salute Henri; she is being literally and metaphorically enlightened by the crowd. In the center of the background, brightly illuminated so as to signify their own state of enlightenment, some young men raise their hats as another man kneels in a quasi-religious way before the statue of Henri IV. The king himself smiles down on the scene, as if he is satisfied with what he sees. Prints like this served to further disseminate and reinforce the status of the statue of Henri IV. The same could be said of a print by Prieur that depicted a now restful crowd watching the guard-house that they had set alight on the Pont-Neuf burn down (fig. 26). Once again, Henri, among his people, smiles down on the crowd with seeming approval.

The popularity of Henri IV was such that Louis XVI appears to have attempted to re-assimilate his forefather into official royalist discourse, realigning Henri with the current régime. For example, Louis XVI came to Paris from Versailles, three days after the fall of the Bastille and declared his interest in his people’s happiness. It cannot have been mere coincidence that he chose to appear before the people through a window directly above the bas-relief of Henri IV that surmounted one of the entrances to the Hôtel de Ville. Not only did Louis symbolically link himself with the ever-popular Henri, but he also wore a revolutionary cockade in his hat to show his solidarity with the wishes of his people. This moment was depicted in a print, “Louis XVI se montre a l’une des fenêtres de la grande salle de l’hôtel-de-ville, la Cocarde Nationale au chapeau” (fig. 27) that served to disseminate the propagandist link between *le peuple*, Henri IV, and Louis XVI. In a sense, the king was using a sculpture of Henri IV, as well as Henri’s reputation, as a resource to proclaim his own revolutionary patriotism. Louis XVI was re-signifying images of Henri IV as representations of virtues that he claimed to share. Louis XVI might have felt that these steps were legitimated by the calls, in the *cahiers de doléances* sent to the Estates General, that a statue of him be erected opposite Henri IV on the Pont-Neuf.⁴⁸ However, sadly for Louis, the surge in his popularity that the convoking of the Estates had caused, had subsided considerably by the time he made his appearance at the

⁴⁸ Merrick op cit, p. 255.

Hôtel de Ville. Given Parisians' suspicions about the king's motives regarding the National Assembly, many people might not have been inclined to sympathise with Louis' new efforts to compare himself publicly with the much loved Henri IV. As it turned out, the monarchy failed to neutralise the potential use of Henri IV and his representations against Louis XVI.

Nevertheless, some projects continued to be proposed for monuments that depicted Louis XVI and Henri IV together. For example, in 1790, Serviteur de Varenne suggested that the National Assembly should raise a tax of one *sol* on every head in France, in order to pay for a statue of the two kings standing face to face on the same pedestal.⁴⁹ In a pamphlet proposing the project it was explained that Henri should be represented saying to Louis that the happiness of a king is the same as that of his people, to which Louis would be shown replying that he and his people were one and the same. Moreau le Jeune produced a print of the project showing a larger and more straight-backed Louis raised slightly above a jovial and relaxed Henri, thus implying the superiority of the eighteenth-century king (fig. 28). Gone were the allegorical figures of slaves or even of virtues used in previous monarchical statues to denote the qualities of kings. In their place were figures representing the advantages that their reigns brought to the nation – allegorical figures of the arts positioned between the two monarchs. But, the tax was never to be raised to pay for the statue and it was never produced. Members of the National Assembly might simply have realised that the tax would prove unpopular at a time of national financial crisis, the sculpture would then have the potential to be used as a focus for protests about governmental extravagance. To anyone who had seen the *affiches* on the statue of Louis XV, it must have been obvious that a statue to the current monarch could take on a similar unofficial function all too quickly, especially by arrogantly comparing the often unpopular Louis to the much loved Henri. A monument to Louis XVI had the potential to be resignified by words, becoming a sign for a lack of consensual support for the king – the exact opposite of its intended function. Those Parisians wishing to use statues of kings as resources for protest against the monarch himself or monarchy *per se* were to have no new sculptures to serve as foci in the coming years. Furthermore, the coming of revolution was to change the way that the statues of Louis XV and Henri IV were used in protests.

⁴⁹ Serviteur de Varenne, "Projet d'un monument à eriger pour le Roi et nosseigneurs des états-généraux", Paris, 1790.

4.3 The use of the statues of kings as resources for protest during the French revolution 1789–1792

I have found no evidence that the statue of Henri IV was used as a resource for protest against Louis XVI between 1789 and 1792, at least not as explicitly as it had been before the revolution. The statue seems to have become a rallying-point for celebration and not protest, albeit divorced from any overt connection with discourses on royalty. For example, in 1791, Dulaure wrote that, “From the very first days of the Parisian revolution, [Henri IV] has had a national cockade on his ear. The day after the day of the federation, the nights of the 15, 16 and 17 July 1790, magnificent festivals were celebrated before the statue. A very well painted decoration, was placed in front of the pedestal, which represented a vast rock on which the statue of Henri IV appeared to be placed; on either side were medallions of MM. La Fayette and Bailly. Concerts, dances, songs and the purest of joy completed these civic festivals, over which the good Henri appeared to smile”.⁵⁰ Nor, according to Dulaure, was this use of the statue of Henri IV as a focus for celebration a revolutionary novelty. He wrote, “in festivals, the people always pay homage [to Henri IV’s statue], while the equestrian statues of other kings, which are more beautiful and more pompous are spurned.”⁵¹ What is more, Dulaure described the statue as “the idol of Parisians”, connoting the quasi-religious veneration afforded to the sculpture by the people. Dulaure further connoted this value of the statue when he noted a pre-revolutionary precedent for the re-signification of the statue that used symbols rather than words, saying that “During the troubles occasioned by the *parlement*, the head of the good king was decorated with flowers and ribbons”.⁵² This kind of decoration of the statue recalls ex-voto practices relating to statues of saints, like the floral tributes taken to Ste. Geneviève by market women in 1789. But, from 1789 onwards, these re-signifying additions to the sculpture of Henri IV also involved specifically revolutionary symbols like the cockade and the portraits described above. Perhaps it was because Henri’s statue was so clearly signified as being a representation of a pro-revolutionary king, that it was never used as a site for *affiches* criticising Louis XVI during the revolution. After all, to post *affiches* on the sculpture would have altered its quasi-official revolutionary appearance, showing a lack of respect for the revolution as well as for the king.

⁵⁰ J. A. Dulaure, “Nouvelle Description des Curiosités de Paris”, Paris, 1791, vol. 2, p. 298.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 296.

⁵² Ibid.

In 1791, Henri IV's statue was officially re-signified. Just like the unofficial re-significations of the sculpture, the official efforts involved changes to the form of the monument that showed little regard for maintaining its historical appearance, but were more concerned with the sculpture's political function. Dulaure noted that "On the railings that separate this monument from the Pont-Neuf was an inscription which ended with the name of Richelieu; this came to be removed". The author explained the removal by saying that Richelieu's name "is eminently odious to the nation and presents a revolting contrast with the name of Henri IV".⁵³ The removal of the inscription provoked a somewhat bewildered response from the antiquarian Puthod de Maison Rouge. On 17 May 1791, he went to a meeting of the CoM in order to inform them that, for about fifteen days, the inscription to Richelieu had been missing from the statue of Henri IV. It struck him as extraordinary that the inscription seemed to have been removed without it being broken and that there was a guardhouse nearby which should have made the theft impossible.⁵⁴ The commissioners were concerned because they, like their visitor, thought the removal had been done without official consent and it was, after all, their duty to ensure the safety of monuments. A fortnight later the commission noted in its minutes that the removal had actually been carried out by the municipality.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Puthod de Maison Rouge and the CoM had been alarmed by what they believed to be an iconoclastic attack on a historically and aesthetically valuable monument.

The confusion caused by the removal of the inscription to Richelieu from the railings surrounding the monument of Henri IV is interesting on two counts. Firstly, it shows the impossibility of the CoM, knowing of the precise condition of all art in Paris, let alone in the provinces; there simply were not enough members to survey the whole city. Secondly, it shows that the municipality had removed the inscription using its own politically motivated initiative without consulting the commission. The timing of the removal coincided with on-going popular dissatisfaction with the municipal government's leniency towards non-jurors, with whom Louis XVI had been widely associated since his attempted trip to St. Cloud. One of the reasons for Henri's popularity was his decision to bring his own religious practices into line with those of his people by converting from Protestantism to Catholicism. Pro-jurors wanted Louis XVI to follow the example of his

⁵³ Ibid., p. 297.

⁵⁴ Alexandre Tuetey, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments 1790-1794", Paris, 1902-1903, vol. 1, p. 36.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 37. The municipality ordered the removal on 7 March 1791, saying, "public monuments are, according to the law, under the immediate surveillance of the municipality". La Croix op cit, series 2, vol. 3, p. 95.

forefather. It could be argued that by removing the unpopular inscription to the arch-Roman Catholic Cardinal Richelieu, the city's governors were attempting to signify their responsiveness to the will of the people, especially regarding royal religious practices; they were signifying Henri IV as a constitutional Catholic. According to the commander of the section's guards, the inscription had been "illiciting rumours" among crowds in the Palais Royal who said they were going to smash it.⁵⁶ For the municipality to remove the inscription served to prevent the public disorder caused by unregulated iconoclasm. The sculpture was being used to mediate power relations, but this time between revolutionary local government and Parisians, and between different revolutionary administrations. The ensuing confusion between officials is further evidence of how their different agendas and varying ways of valuing art could lead to conflicts of interest between them, a point we will return to below. No doubt the municipality's move was popular with many Parisians, but others must have found it offensive on political grounds. For example, one can scarcely imagine that the known reactionary *Abbé* Maury would have thought the removal appropriate, given that in 1791 he wrote, "Since the great basis put down by Cardinal Richelieu, all of Europe has been in equilibrium. This immortal Minister [...] re-established calm".⁵⁷ The statue of Henri IV was no longer being used as a resource for overt popular protests against the current monarch. Yet, during the opening years of the revolution the sculpture was officially and unofficially re-signified as serving a new political function as a sign of good revolutionary kingship.

The setting up of a recruiting station, replete with the revolutionary symbolism of liberty trees, red bonnets, cockades and uniforms in front of the statue in early 1792 further signified the sculpture of Henri IV as a revolutionary image.⁵⁸ The print after Prieur's drawing, "Proclamation de la Patrie en danger. Les enrôlements des volontaires au Pont-Neuf" helped to disseminate and reinforce the new meaning of the statue of Henri IV (fig. 29). This function of the statue is further evidence of it being used by the municipal authorities as a focal point for the construction of a revolutionary consensus and rousing of patriotic fervour. In the process, the monument was altered physically through the addition and removal of symbols, in an effort to bring its signifiers into line with the new meaning and function it assumed in the context of revolutionary action. This process

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 97.

⁵⁷ L'abbé Maury, "Esprit, pensées et maximes de M. l'abbé Maury député à l'Assemblée nationale", Paris, 1791, p. 343.

⁵⁸ Mercier reports that the statue of Henri IV had long served as a backdrop to the activities of recruiting officers who would attempt to arouse patriotic fervour through reference to the popular king. Kaplow (ed.) op cit, pp. 72-73.

could be objected to on connoisseurial and/or political grounds – using the statue as a resource for consensus building inevitably alienated some people. As such, the sculpture remained a locus of disagreement, if not a focus for explicit public protest. However, in the context of doubts about Louis XVI's revolutionary sympathy, it could be argued that the gradual re-significations of the statue of Henri IV were implicit protests against the current monarch. The signification of Henri IV as an unambiguous supporter of the revolution inevitably invited viewers to imagine an unflattering contrast with Louis XVI.

Louis XVI's attempted flight from France in June 1791 was halted at Varennes but news of it greatly aggravated popular doubts about his revolutionary credentials. According to Gustave Isambert's diary, Parisians promptly began "effacing king, queen and [the word] royal from signs, smashing the arms of France and scraping-off fleurs de lys". He says that, someone wrote on the door to the Louvre, "Furnished town-house to let", another wit added underneath, "Left without leaving a forwarding address".⁵⁹ Thus, the popular response to Varennes was both iconoclastic and humorous. But, it seems odd that no records survive from this period of humorous *affiches* being posted on the statue of Louis XV. However, the statue was used as a means of protest against Louis XVI in 1792, at a time when France was at war with Austria and suspicion was rife that the king's Austrian wife was further undermining his allegiance to the revolution by pressing him to support the cause of her native land. The incident in question is connected with the flight to Varennes because it relates to the anniversary of the king's departure.

As was noted in chapter one, prints of the charge of the Prince de Lambesc had long since established a connection between the square, the statue and a lack of royal support for the revolution. One should add that prints depicting the return of Louis XVI from Versailles after the October days reinforced these associations between the square, its monument and the ambiguity of Louis XVI's support for the revolution as did prints produced after the flight to Varennes (fig. 30). Some such images showed the statue of Louis XV prominently in scenes where the king was being forced to return to revolutionary Paris; others used the different sculptures from the square as signifiers. The technique was still in use in the late nineteenth century when a print showed the statue of a man restraining a horse, signifying the halting of the king's flight from France (fig. 31).⁶⁰ On 15 April 1792, a festival in honour of the Swiss of Châteaueux was held. As Mona Ozouf has

⁵⁹ Gustave Isambert op cit, p. 51.

⁶⁰ However, the moving of this figure from the Marly Horses composition was only agreed in 1794.

argued, the festival was controversial in the context of revolutionary politics because it was not organised by a government agency and was effectively championing the liberation of soldiers who had mutinied against governmental authority in 1790.⁶¹ Isambert wrote that, "To get to the *Champs de Mars*, [the Châteaueux procession] had to cross the Place Louis XV and pass the equestrian statue of an insufficiently constitutional king. Some foresighted citizens had anticipated the festival when the great patriotic procession came down the *rue Royale* it found the *ci-devant Bien Aimé* wearing a red bonnet, holding a tricolor in his hand with cockades in the ears of his horse".⁶² In Prieur's print of the Châteaueux festival, it is impossible to tell whether or not the statue of Louis XV sports a red bonnet and cockades, although it clearly does not hold a tricolor flag (fig. 32). However, one can clearly see that some of *le peuple* are standing above the king, as if to signify the superiority of their sovereignty over the monarchy's. Like the parading of the procession's revolutionary symbols and prints relating to revolutionary actions in the square, the re-signification of the statue of Louis XV on 15 April 1792 was a re-signification of both the space and the statue as positively revolutionary. Certainly, the events of 20 June 1792, the anniversary of Varennes, suggest that the addition of revolutionary symbols to the statue earlier in the year had been intended to be a warning to the current "insufficiently constitutional king". On 20 June, pro-revolutionary Parisians entered the Tuileries Palace and made the king appear on a terrace wearing a red bonnet to drink a toast to the crowd and the revolution (figs. 33). Thus, one could argue, the treatment of the king's grandfather's statue, during the Châteaueux procession, played out a re-signification of the current monarch in the symbolic realm, with the statue acting as a substitute for the body of his grandson. On the anniversary of the flight to Varennes the king's own body became a resource for protest against him, in a way that had been rehearsed weeks before using the sculpture.

Nevertheless, it seems odd that the statue of Louis XV was so rarely used as a means of protest during the revolution, given that this function had been so common before 1789. How is this change to be explained? There are three obvious reasons for the apparent absence of reports of the statue's re-signification by written or spoken words that undermined its intended function. Firstly, the lifting of censorship laws in 1788 meant that criticism of Louis XVI could, henceforth, be articulated in newspapers, pamphlets and prints, diminishing the need to use the statue of Louis XV to signify protest.

⁶¹ Ozouf op cit, pp. 66–79. Even before the festival, the police commissioner of the Section du Palais Royal had reported that tumultuous scene took place on the rue St. Honoré between people for and against the celebration. Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire", vol. 5 (number 2 of the Legislative Assembly), Doc. 3557.

⁶² Isambert op cit, p. 83.

Secondly, it is possible that the old treatment of the statue continued but was simply not recorded because more overt and direct modes of criticism were reported in their place. Thirdly, it can be argued that the statue of Louis XV continued to be used as a resource for protest, but in a different form. That is to say, criticism of the king that had traditionally been focused on the statues of Louis XV and Henri IV (as counter-exemplar and exemplar), increasingly took the form of calls for the destruction of *all* the sculptures of all the kings in public squares. The treatment of the statues still worked as a metaphor for attitudes towards royalty, but in a new way that gave priority to their permanent and not temporary re-signification. These calls for the sculptures' destruction were imaginable precisely because the statues had, for some time, been well established as resources for ridicule and disrespect.

The calls for destruction of the statues of kings, and the responses that they received, reveal the tensions between the different ways of valuing art and also between the various political views that were current during the period 1789–1792. Perhaps the earliest call for such destruction came on 9 September 1789, in the *Révolutions de Paris*.⁶³ The article argued that the sculptures were not made by the people or for the people, and that the bronze from the statue of Louis XIII should be used to erect a statue to the citizens who had given their lives for the revolution. In effect, the author was suggesting that the material value of the statue of a king far out-weighed any historical, aesthetic or political value it had in its current form; it should be transformed into a monument to the newly sovereign people. However, the call went unheeded by the revolutionary authorities that did not wish to jeopardise the fragile consensus they were attempting to build around “king, law and faith”. No doubt connoisseurs would have been as alarmed as royalists were by the suggestion that any of the statues should be destroyed. Certainly, the National Assembly's decision to remove the sculpted slaves from the base of the Louis XIV statue in the Place des Victoires, in time for the *Fédération* of July 1790, elicited a negative response from those who valued the objects on aesthetic grounds. On 19 June, de Lameth had said that the slaves were inappropriate motifs for a public sculpture in a land of Liberty. The next day a decree was passed saying that “it is important to the glory of the nation to leave no surviving monument that recalls ideas of slavery”.⁶⁴ Three days later the eminent sculptor Caffieri wrote an open letter to the mayor of Paris, Bailly,

⁶³ Cited by Idzerda op cit, p. 15.

⁶⁴ Réau op cit, p. 303. There had been statues of slaves at the corners of the Henri IV pedestal on the Pont-Neuf, but they were removed under public pressure in 1775. Merrick op cit, p. 253. Before the revolution, Mercier had criticised the use of the slaves motif on statues of kings in his proto-science fiction book, “Astraea's Return: or, the Halcyon days in France in the year 2440: A dream”, London, 1797, p. 21.

condemning the decision on the behalf of his colleagues from the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture. His argument was based on the aesthetic value of the slaves, the sculptor argued that their removal would wreck the symmetry of the monument. The National Assembly refused to change its position and the slaves were duly taken down.⁶⁵ The measure could be seen as being a public signification of the Legislature's position on the issue of monarchy; total abolition/destruction was not acceptable, but reform along enlightened and constitutional lines was. Nevertheless, the treatment of the statues of slaves rejected ways of thinking about them that privileged aesthetic value and, instead, focused on the political function of the sculpture. Dulaure, who recognised the aesthetic argument for preserving the statues, still agreed that they had to go. He wrote, "It was wished to spare foreigners, deputies from the provinces and above all those from Franche-Comté, a province represented under the emblem of one of the slaves, this humiliating spectacle".⁶⁶

In 1790, calls came for the outright destruction of all statues of kings. In a pamphlet published in that year, a citizen calling himself Bret suggested the systematic destruction of all the royal statues. He wrote, "To efface forever all souvenirs of royalty, there will be named a permanent committee of four inspectors, artists, sculptors and bronze founders, who will be specially charged with incessantly transporting themselves to all the public squares of our capitals, and presiding there over the abolition and destruction of pedestrian and equestrian statues of our monarchs".⁶⁷ The revolutionary authorities could not possibly condone such a measure without further alienating those French people already wary of the pace of revolutionary reform. Nor did the Assembly wish to alienate French citizens or foreigners who valued art on aesthetic or historical grounds and were willing to over-look political connotations even if they agreed that they were offensive. One can see that although the specific statue of Louis XV might not have been being used as it once had been – as a site for *affiches* and a foci for protest against the Crown –*all* the statues of kings were coming share that old function.

⁶⁵ They were removed by the sculptor Daujon. Gautherot op cit., p. 82, n. 3.

⁶⁶ Dulaure op cit, vol. 2, p. 301.

⁶⁷ Un citoyen Bret, nouvellement réfugié dans la Capitale, "Lettre à M. l'abbé Aubert rédacteur des petits affiches de Paris, Sur un moyen certain, et qui lui est proposé, de donner successivement plus de vogue à son journal [sic]; suivie d'un projet de vent par décret forcé d'un très-beau et magnifique royaume, quoiqu'en toute roture, à la barre de l'assemblée nationale, et terminée par quelques réflexions politiques sur les affaires du temps présent", Paris, 1790, p. 50.

The treatment of the statues in the nationalised abbey of St. Germain des Près in 1791 offers an example of how divergent ways of valuing art led to confrontations over the treatment of sculptures representing kings. On 17 May 1791, the CoM read a letter that was sent to them by a genealogist, Philippe Baert, dated 7 May. Baert expressed serious concerns over the measures taken by the local sectional officers who were preparing the *ci-devant* abbey of St. Germain des Près to function as a parish church. On 29 April 1791, in order to clear space in the abbey's church, the *sectionnaires* had pulled down grills and demolished the tombs of Chilpéric I, Chilpéric II and Clotaire II, as well as those of Bertrude, Bilihilde and Frédegonde, which were in the sanctuary.⁶⁸ Baert wrote, "These destructions were carried out despite the representations of some Benedictines and various other people sensitive to the destruction of monuments, which, despite being grossly sculpted, were still precious because of their antiquity." He was alarmed to overhear *sectionnaires* discussing whether or not to chop up a statue of Frégonde in order to fit it into a cart more easily. Baert said that, "The destruction of several other monuments was suspended" only on the appeals of M d'Ormesson, librarian to the king, when he went to the church on 31 April. In the meantime, statues of St. Aurèle, St. George, St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist had all been destroyed. Five statues of kings and queens of France had also been "placed at floor-level in a manner", Baert complained, "which in several years time will mean they are destroyed by the passage of feet." It is possible that the *sectionnaires* regarded the saints and the kings as being politically and religiously illegitimate objects of a non-juring institution. Certainly, the statues of kings were literally brought down to the level of the viewer, a measure that would seem to have little to do with creating space and a lot to do with making a symbolic point about Parisians being able to readily survey monarchs' activities and having an equal share in sovereignty. Clearly, the objects were not valued by the *sectionnaires* on aesthetic or historical grounds. They thought about the images and the space principally in terms of their functions, which had changed and required re-signification. For the concerned connoisseur, Baert, there was no option but to appeal to the national CoM for help in enforcing respect for the objects' physical integrity on the grounds of their aesthetic and historical values. But the attacks were already a *fait accompli* by the time the commission heard about them. Once again, the commissioners had simply not known what was happening within their own city in time to take measures to prevent iconoclasm. A new mode of treating statues of kings was developing. They were to be destroyed or removed rather than partially re-signified through the addition or subtraction of symbols.

⁶⁸ Tuetey op cit, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 1, pp. 272-274.

Connoisseurs and royalists who were aware of the occurrences in St. Germain des Près were no doubt dismayed by the activities of the *sectionnaires*. But there can be little doubt that many of the more politically radical Parisians, who did not value art primarily on aesthetic or historical grounds, sympathised strongly with the mutilations, removals and destructions. Certainly, calls for the destruction of statues of kings continued in 1791, especially after the king's flight to Varennes. For example, on 16 July 1791, two female members of the *Société des Deux Sexes*, the sister club of the *Cordeliers*, called for the overturning of all the statues of kings in Paris.⁶⁹ But to the *Cordeliers* this was an unconstitutional measure that would effectively have been a rejection of the National Assembly if acted upon without the legislators' consent. Clearly, the National Assembly would not condone the measure because after his flight it was trying to reintegrate the king into revolutionary discourse by allowing him a role in the new Constitution. It was probably this very process that the women, Maillard and Cordin, were symbolically attacking. They were brought before the *Cordeliers'* disciplinary committee and charged with bringing the club into public disrepute. Both of them were de-selected, but not before Maillard had thrown herself out of a window, agonised by her treatment. She survived to hear the judgement that she had so dreaded from the committee. Maillard might have been bemused at her treatment, given that, on 21 June 1791, following the news of the king's flight, the *Cordeliers* had called for the destruction of the monarchy "instantly and forever".⁷⁰ Yet, the club's change in direction, in the light of the National Assembly's shifting position, is indicative of how swiftly alterations could occur in the discourses on which the treatment of the statues of kings were largely contingent.

The episode at the *Cordeliers* shows how strongly some sections of the Parisian public felt about the issues of the king and the royal statues. But, the example is also revealing of the tenuous political position that the National Assembly had adopted by trying to salvage the constitutional monarchy. What other choice did they have when civil war might erupt if the king was forced to abdicate? The legislature's efforts to rehabilitate the king certainly made them unpopular with a large proportion of Parisians who were politically active in the clubs and sections. A petition began to circulate around the city calling for universal suffrage and a referendum on the king's constitutional role. On 17 July 1781, when a large crowd gathered with the petition on the Champs de Mars, they were dispersed with gunfire. Bailly and Lafayette were blamed for the resulting deaths,

⁶⁹ Isabelle Bourdin, "Les sociétés populaires à Paris pendant la Révolution", Paris, 1937, p. 37.

⁷⁰ Anon, "Club des Cordeliers. Pétition de la Société des Amis des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, aux Représentants de la Nation", Paris, 21 June 1791.

but the National Assembly were also implicated because they too were thought to value the king's sovereignty over that of the people, willing to pay heed to *him* but not them. As we will see in the next section, this situation had profound consequences for the treatment of the statues of kings. Due to the alignment of the Assembly with the king, the statues of monarchs came to connote not only the increasingly unpopular institution of monarchy but also the National Assembly's support of it. The regular re-signification of statues of kings with *affiches* had already been largely superseded by calls for the destruction of kings' statues or by actual removal of their motifs or whole compositions. The legislature was thought to be almost as out of step with the will of the people as the monarch. The statues of kings' function as resources for protest had taken on a new dimension and it would eventually lead to their destruction.

4.4 The destruction of the statues of kings in public spaces in Paris and the implications for all royal images

Discontent with the National Assembly in the sections and clubs in Paris was aggravated by laws that banned the sections from discussing anything other than municipal issues and a ruling that clubs could no longer bring joint petitions to the bar of the legislature.⁷¹ Both measures sought to prevent local assemblies from becoming loci for opposition to the national government's policies, including its treatment of the king. But suspicion of Louis XVI continued to mount in the sections. On 22–23 February 1792, the Section du Palais Royal had doubled its guard because it was convinced that Louis XVI was going to attempt to flee France again.⁷² Then, on 27 May 1792, the National Assembly accepted the king's veto of a decree that all non-juring priests would be open to deportation if denounced by 20 active citizens.⁷³ For many Parisians this must have seemed to be further proof that the National Assembly was protecting a king who was willing to override the sovereign wishes of *le peuple* in order to defend the non-juring enemies of the

⁷¹ R. B. Rose, "The Making of the *Sans-Culottes*. Democratic Ideas and Institutions in Paris 1789–92", Manchester, 1983, p. 113.

⁷² Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4 (number 1 of the Legislative Assembly), Doc. 450.

⁷³ Sorel op cit, pp. 30–31.

revolution. In response to this news, and the fall of Lille to Austrian troops, many of the sections, for example the Croix-Rouge in the parish of St. Sulpice, called on the National Assembly to allow them to meet *en permanence*.⁷⁴ Fearing that Paris was actually in danger from the Austrian army, calls began to intensify for the arming of all citizens. Yet, in June, Louis XVI dismissed the Brissotin "patriotic" ministers, who had initially championed the war, and then he vetoed the summoning of *fédérés* troops to Paris to help defend the city. It seemed to the *sectionnaires* that the National Assembly was standing by a king who was intent on weakening France's defences in order to ease Austria's victory and facilitate a counter-revolution.⁷⁵ Anger mounted when the National Assembly sacked the mayor of Paris and the procurer-general, Pétion and Manuel respectively, for failing to prevent the invasion of the Tuileries Palace on 20 June 1792, when the king was forced to don the red bonnet.⁷⁶

Yet, what was the legislature to do? They knew perfectly well that there were plenty of people throughout France who subscribed to the view of monarchy championed by Maury the previous year. He had written, "the monarchical government, is the only one which suits the expanses of France and the character of the French, it must never be attacked in this [National] assembly by abstract maxims of chimerical perfection".⁷⁷ Even in the clubs there were orators who, early in 1792, acknowledged potential defenders of the monarchy. For example, a letter sent to the patriotic society in the Section du Luxembourg, attacking kings' war-like tendencies said, "I hear my readers say: you are censoring that which has been the object of all people, the strength, the power, the love of glory and even that of *la patrie*. What about these great monarchs, these famous conquerors, these heroes, these demi-gods who have astonished as much as frightened the universe with their exploits, who have propagated so many eulogies, and raised superb monuments, were they nothing but vicious men?"⁷⁸ Nevertheless, anti-monarchical feeling was undoubtedly gaining momentum in the sections. On 11 July, *la patrie* had been declared to be *en danger* and more and more sections were allowing their passive citizens to take part in deliberations. Later in the month, the National Assembly managed to secure the arrival of *fédérés* troops from Marseilles for the celebrations in

⁷⁴ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4, Doc. 459.

⁷⁵ For example, the Section du Croix Rouge denounced the obstinacy of Louis XVI to the National Assembly, saying that he seemed to be driven by an "evil *génie*". Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4, Doc 3972.

⁷⁶ For example, in early July, both the Section du Croix Rouge and the Section du Palais Royal complained about these dismissals to the National Assembly and demanded reinstatement. Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4, Docs. 1174 & 1195.

⁷⁷ Maury op cit, p. 267.

⁷⁸ N. A. F., 2705, no. 21.

honour of 14 July. With *fédérés* and *passives* active in the sections, radicalism flourished. By the end of July, 47 of Paris' 48 sections had demanded that the National Assembly make a definitive decision on the future of the untrustworthy king by 10 August, or else *le peuple* would take the matter into their own hands. In the first half of 1792, calls for the destruction of the statues of kings had largely been replaced by calls for the destruction of the monarchy, many of which, however, were couched in distinctly iconoclastic terms. For example, the Section du Mauconseil declared, "let us break this colossus of despotism to pieces, and may the noise of his fall reach the uttermost parts of the earth, and make every tyrant turn pale".⁷⁹ But by 11 August 1792, the statues had actually begun to fall.

On 9 August 1792, representatives from every section of Paris met in the Hôtel de Ville and declared that they were the new municipal government, or Commune. Collectively they began to lay plans for the action they would take if the National Assembly failed to meet the next day's deadline for a ruling on the king's fate. By the morning of 10 August, the legislature had failed to act. In the Place Royale, under the statue of Louis XIII, the camp of *fédérés* troops was being mobilised. In the Place Vendôme, with the statue of Louis XIV, *gendarmes* and the *Bataillon des Jacobins* waited, charged with defending the government offices from attack. Troops and armed *sectionnaires* passed by the sculpture of Louis XIV in the Place des Victoires on their way to the Tuileries palace that they planned to storm. Armed men guarded both sides of the Pont-Neuf on behalf of the Commune, preventing the passage of people not loyal to their cause. Apart from the quiet Place Louis XV, every public space in Paris where a statue of a king was to be found was bristling with armed men and women. Parisians were on the move and the royal squares had become theatres for anti-monarchist, radical action; the spaces had been irrevocably re-signified by their new uses and the statues of kings must have seemed more incongruous than ever. By the end of the day the Tuileries palace had fallen to the massed ranks of Parisians and *fédérés*, the king and royal family were cowering in the lexicographers box in the National Assembly, and the cadavers of Swiss guards littered the Place Louis XV and the Place Louis XIV. The next day, the long resented statue of Louis XV was toppled by *le peuple* and similar efforts then began in the Place Vendôme and the Place des Victoires.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Anon op cit, "A journal during a residence", p. 18.

⁸⁰ This is the order of attacks on the statues that was reported in Richard Twiss, "A Trip to Paris in July and August 1792", London, 1792, p. 109. The same order is reported in Jean Georges Wille, "Mémoires et journal de Jean Georges Wille graveur du Roi", Paris, 1857.

It is unsurprising that it was the statue of Louis XV that was the first to fall. It had, as we have seen, long been established as a site for protest against the monarchy. However, the timing of the attack on the sculpture suggests that it was used as a means of protest not just against the power of the monarchy, but also against the National Assembly. Rather than acquiesce to the demands for the removal of the Louis XVI from power, on 10 August the legislature had suspended him just as it had done in the face of popular anger after the flight to Varennes. By pulling down the statue, *sectionnaires* signified that this ruling was unacceptable, that they would no longer tolerate kings having sovereignty over Paris – as signified by the sculptures in public places. There was no longer any question of waiting for official ratification before carrying out the long mooted removal of all the sculptures of kings. After all, the battle of the day before had been about forcing the legislature to recognise the sovereign wishes of the people. In effect, the statue of Louis XV was being used to make an unmediated point to the National Assembly: that it could no longer deny the will of the people and remain legitimate in their eyes. The iconoclasm was a symbolic test of the nation's representatives. In this context, the flurry of iconoclastic legislation that followed the felling can be seen as being efforts by the legislature and the Commune to signify their close representation of the people's will. In other words, iconoclastic decrees became a way for national and municipal government to legitimise their power.

In fact, on the morning of 10 August, the Commune had used an iconoclastic event to signify its close relationship to the will of the people and, therefore, its legitimacy. Busts representing Bailly, Lafayette and Louis XVI were smashed in the Commune's meeting room.⁸¹ As early as 29 March, the section de l'Observatoire said that busts of living men should not be erected in public places because a man could be properly judged until after his death.⁸² Then, on 4 April 1792, the Section du Luxembourg ruled that the municipality would be asked to remove all busts of living men from its general assembly room.⁸³ For those members of the municipal government who were familiar with Roman uses of busts, perhaps as described in the *Encyclopédie*, destruction of the sculptures

⁸¹ Réau op cit, p. 325. Chaumette later described the perceived significance of the busts, "This municipal body, composed in a large part of counter-revolutionaries, of friends of Lafayette and above all of martial law, this municipal body having audaciously resisted the publicity of its meetings and which, against the wishes of the citizens of Paris, had the impudence to conserve in its meeting room the busts of Bailly, Lafayette and of Louis XVI, stones awaiting the counter-revolution". Chaumette, "Mémoires de Chaumette sur la Révolution du 10 Août 1792", Paris, 1893, 45.

⁸² Anon, "Extrait du Registre des délibérations de l'Assemblée générale des Citoyens de la Section de l'Observatoire. Du Jeudi 29 Mars 1792, l'an 4^e de la Liberté", Paris, 1792.

⁸³ Anon, "Extrait du registre des délibérations des Assemblées Générales de la Section du Luxembourg. Du samedi, quatrième jour d'avril, l'an quatrième de la Liberté", Paris, 1792.

would have had connotations of the treatment that ancients afforded to the sculpted portraits of those found guilty of crimes.⁸⁴ The municipality refused the removals. After all, it would have implied that Louis XVI, Lafayette, and Bailly were all criminals, a potentially divisive suggestion. On 20 April 1792, more demands were made for the destruction of the busts of Bailly and Lafayette, this time actually in the Hôtel de Ville. People shouted "Down with Lafayette! Down with the white horse!" and the scene was only brought under control when Manuel and other municipal officers arrived to restore order.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the sections continued to insist that the statues go because they represented an increasingly unpopular king and the two men still blamed for the Champs de Mars massacre.⁸⁶ The destruction of the busts on 10 August 1792 clearly signified to the sections that the new municipality was no longer going to deny their wishes, rather it would represent them faithfully.

The National Assembly did not take the same kind of initiative as the Commune did with regard to iconoclastic actions on 10 August 1792. But, on 11 August, Sers announced to the legislature that, "the people are spreading in the squares and want to abolish the statues of kings [...] I demand that the sections name commissioners to oppose them or engineers to prevent the dangers that could result from the fall of these enormous masses."⁸⁷ Several members shouted, "The Assembly cannot authorise the destruction of these monuments!" Perhaps this resistance was based on the ever-present fear of civil war, and/or on connoisseurial concerns about the aesthetic value of the sculpture. Either way, the following order of the day was made, "The Assembly, considering it is the manifest will of the people that no public monument should any longer exist which recalls the reign of despotism, declares a state of urgency".⁸⁸ The removal of the statues from the sections in which they were located was decreed. Commissioners were charged with supervision of the task and "conservation" of the pieces. One representative, Marant, requested that the ever-popular Henri IV sculpture on the Pont-Neuf be spared, but he was shouted down. Anyway, the Assembly was impotent to prevent so many armed

⁸⁴ Diderot & D'Alembert op cit, vol. 18, p. 348. Another text noted that "Images of those who were found guilty of some crime were broken". J. P. Costard, N. Fallet, A. G. Contant d'Orville, "Dictionnaire universel historique et critique des mœurs, loix, usages et coutumes civils, militaires et politique, et des ceremonies religieuses et superstitieuses, tant ancien que moderne, des peuples des quatre parties du monde", Paris, 1772, vol. 2, p. 258.

⁸⁵ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 5, Doc. 2934.

⁸⁶ The Section du Croix Rouge joined other sections in July 1792 to publicly declare that "the blade of the law" ought to fall on Lafayette because he was guilty of complicity with Bouillé over the Nancy affair. Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4, Doc. 1132.

⁸⁷ "Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860. Recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises", Paris, 1969, series 1, vol. 48, p. 2.

⁸⁸ "Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée Nationale", Paris, 1792, vol. 13, p. 72.

citizens carrying-out the destruction. The people in the squares had forced the hand of the Assembly again on 11 August as they had the day before. On 12 August, the Commune also passed an *ordre du jour*, eager not to seem out of step with the people's wishes. It declared that monuments of kings *and* "all the attributes of the old feudalism" were to be "destroyed entirely" in Paris.⁸⁹ The broader scope of this ruling can be seen as an effort by the Commune to take the initiative in this highly symbolic matter. Perhaps it was partly on these grounds that the National Assembly was motivated to pass another decree on 14 August, this time specifying more clearly their accord with the people. They declared that "the sacred principles of liberty and equality will not permit the existence of monuments raised to ostentation, prejudice and tyranny to continue to offend the eyes of the French people". All royal imagery was to be destroyed.⁹⁰

The destruction of the statues continued apace in the squares of Paris, but confusion shrouded the issue of who precisely was now to be responsible for the work. It was important to supporters of both the legislature and the Commune to be seen to be involved. Palloy, famed for his dismantling of the Bastille, later claimed that the National Assembly had told him to appoint entrepreneurs to bring down the statues on 11 August 1792.⁹¹ He set about approaching the sectional administrations within whose jurisdiction the sculptures lay, except for the Place Louis XV where, he noted, the people had been, "*plus expeditif*" and the statue was already on the ground.⁹² Palloy then found himself engaged in an argument with a representative of Poyet, the Commune's architect, who insisted that the debris be taken to the municipal foundry at Roule and not to the sites designated by entrepreneurs that Palloy had already engaged.⁹³ Palloy insisted that he had the power of the law behind him. However, so far as can be told from the National Assembly's minutes, Palloy had not been formally charged with the work and an impasse seems to have been reached in the argument because, at that time, it had not been officially decided what to do with the debris. It was only on 14 August that the National Assembly

⁸⁹ F. Braesch, "La Commune du dix août 1792", Paris, 1911, p. 388.

⁹⁰ Cited in Idzerda op cit, p. 16.

⁹¹ Palloy, "Discours Prononcé en Présence des Bataillons de Volontaires et Citoyens d'Épernay, le 23 Septembre 1792, l'an IV de la Liberté et Premier de l'Égalité: Pour Répondre au Calomnies Répandues par le Ministre Roland et Autres, Contre le Patriote Palloy", Paris, 1792.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Palloy was involved in something of a professional feud with Poyet, who had accused Palloy of false accounting in his invoices to the municipality. In the same discourse quoted above, Palloy used a reference to the busts of Bailly *et al* which, had been in the Hôtel de Ville, as a means of protest against Poyet's claims. Palloy insisted that Poyet had opposed a call for the destruction of the busts made at the start of August 1792, only to change his mind when the winds of change swept through the Commune on 10 August. Attitudes towards images could become grounds for denunciations. Ibid.

specified that “the bronze from these monuments can be converted into canon”.⁹⁴ They also declared that, “All the statues, bas-reliefs, inscriptions and other monuments made bronze or other metals that exist in public squares, gardens, parks, or public buildings will be removed by the Communes”.⁹⁵ Thus, it transpired that Palloy had no official role to play in the removal of the statues, it was the municipality’s responsibility. Immediately after the decree, the municipal entrepreneur, Deveze, working on the orders of Poyet, began “the demolition and removal of the equestrian and pedestrian figures of the Place Louis XV, which were transported by dray and cart to the Roule foundry”.⁹⁶ The work kept Deveze busy until 23 August. In seeking to signify its legitimacy because of its accord with the will of the people, and perhaps in response to the Commune’s rulings, the National Assembly had passed a law that all metal images from every non-private building in France could end up in the crucible. *Le peuple’s* way of prioritising the political function of imagery over its form, and material value over aesthetic or historical value, had led to the institutionalisation of iconoclasm on a nationwide scale.

Following 11 August 1792, many prints of the destruction of the statues of kings were produced. These images offered a way of representing and imagining the fall of the monarchy and the transferal of sovereignty into the hands of *le peuple*. Perhaps the most literal representation of the iconoclasm as a symbolic transferal of sovereignty was a print called “Place des Victoires. Louis le Grand renversé pour faire place a la Colonne de la Liberté et de l’Egalité” (fig. 34). The image shows the debris of Louis XIV at the foot of the pedestal with an emblem marked by *fleurs de lys* prominently foregrounded. In the right foreground, armed men stand looking through the dust that the felling has raised at an obelisk that had been proposed to replace the statue.⁹⁷ The artist managed to clearly connote the meaning of both the iconoclastic attack and the events of 10 August by including two moments in the image; the moment of the destruction of the statue of a king that had signified royal sovereignty and the future moment, when the new obelisk would eventually be erected to mark the peoples’ sovereignty. Another image from the same series of prints dealt with the same issue by positioning the people triumphantly on top of the empty pedestal (fig. 35). Once a again, the scene takes place amid a cloud of dust that obscures the debris while the ever transparent people, red bonnets aloft, are readily

⁹⁴ Braesch op cit, 389.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ F/13/964, dossier 2, no. 149.

⁹⁷ In December 1792, a man called Bailly was employed by the municipality to paint the 17 articles of the Rights of Man onto an obelisk in the renamed Place des Victoires Nationale. A. N., F/17/1053, dossier 2.

visible. Other prints focused more on the mechanics of overturning the statues, serving as metaphors for the collective effort of 10 August. For example, Prieur's engraving, "Destruction du monument de Louis XIV sur la Place des Victoires, 11 août 1792", depicts the moment when the levering and pulling of the statue finally overcame its inertia and it began to topple (fig. 36). The crowd is shown standing cheering. Two figures, perhaps implying the superiority of *le peuple*, are raised above the statue, standing on a roof in the left foreground.⁹⁸ Perhaps Prieur was also playing representational games with time in his image, the carriage might be meant to connote a highly symbolic encounter Louis XVI had with the statue as the royal family was accompanied to the *Temple* prison. An English visitor to Paris noted that, "In going through the Place Vendôme, whether it happened from the mere confluence of people, or by premeditated design, the carriage was stopped for a considerable time near the overturned statue of Louis XIV".⁹⁹ An American visitor wrote, "When the King came up to the Place Vendôme the mob ordered the Coach to Stop and Desired him to look on his Grandfather Lewis the 14th [sic] with a halter around his neck laying on the Ground partly brock and at the same time called him all the names they could think of".¹⁰⁰ Prieur seems to depict elements of each story, a carriage halted by jubilant people and the statue with a halter around its neck.

Comparing Prieur's image of the over turning of the Place Vendôme statue and the version published by the *Révolutions de Paris* we can see that the prints cannot be regarded as reportage (fig. 37). While they both focus on the practical process of removing the statue from its pedestal, they show different equipment and the *Révolutions de Paris*'s image shows an orderly and relatively somber crowd witnessing an event that is thus implied to be of great importance. The *Révolutions de Paris* also depicted the fall of all of the other statues of kings, in a series of 6 coupled images. Of the series, only Louis XV's statue is shown already on the ground, perhaps implying that it was the first to fall (fig. 38). The series' depictions of the fall of the sculptures of Louis XIII and Henri IV are particularly interesting. The former print includes the strangely prophetic motif of a member of *le peuple* decapitating the king, whose descendent would be beheaded on 21 January 1793 (fig. 39). In the foreground, a young child can be seen

⁹⁸ Another four people are depicted sitting on the roof of shack at the front of the image on the left-hand side, seeking a better view. The shack might be a book-shop similar to Charles-Joseph Desvertus' lodge sealed against a wall on the corner of the Place Vendôme opposite the Capucines. Tuetey op cit, "Repertoire", vol. 5, Doc. 3488. This could to signify the pedagogic role of literature in making the revolution possible.

⁹⁹ Anon, "A journal during a residence in France" op cit, vol. 1, p. 101.

¹⁰⁰ William L. Chew III, "A Bostonian Merchant Witnesses the Second French Revolution", London, 1992, p. 32.

racing to inspect a piece of the debris; he acts as a metaphor for future republicanism. Depicting the fall of the statue of Henri IV was, perhaps, the most problematic challenge to the *imagier* because both king and statue were still immensely popular. The print shows a calm crowd watching as Henri is toppled from his horse (fig. 40). In a final gesture, Henri's right hand is shown pointing to the bonnet that surmounts the liberty tree beside the volunteers' recruitment station. It is as if the much-loved king is reminding the people of their duty to protect liberty even as he falls.

Indeed, the felling of the Henri IV statue had caused some serious soul searching among Parisians. On 14 August, the day of the National Assembly's definitive iconoclastic decree, representatives of the Section d'Henri IV had come to the legislature to announce that they had pulled down his statue only after lengthy deliberation. They had finally chosen iconoclastic action when they realised that Henri, despite his good qualities, had not been a constitutional king.¹⁰¹ Once the sculpture had fallen, it was noted that "the bronze was not half an inch thick, and the hollow part was filled up with brick earth."¹⁰² Yet, I have found no comments that transformed this observation into a metaphorical attack on the monarchy. Mercier could not, on the other hand, resist doing just that with reference to the statue of Louis XV. He observed that he had seen the "multitude" express extreme disappointment on their first inspection of the statue. They had expected the monument to yield a good mass of bronze to serve some useful purpose, namely as canon to fire on the armies of other kings. But when the dust cleared they yelled, "What! It was *this* hollow?" In his text Mercier responds, "Yes, all was hollow, the power and the statue!"¹⁰³ On the other hand, reports of the fall of the Henri IV statue tended to emphasise the bemusement of people who had always been fond of it. On 17 August, *Le Moniteur Universel* ran the following letter to the editor, an apologist piece for the iconoclasm. "Yesterday, sir, on passing over the Pont-Neuf, I saw a man stop by the place where there was the statue of Henri IV; he appeared to have dived into profound reflection. I waited several moments by his side without speaking to him. Two or three minutes later, I said to him: 'Do you believe, sir, the fact that the statue of the brave and good Henri has been over-turned?' – Yes, sir, replied my good man, do you not see it? No, I responded to him, it is not only Henri that I see on the ground, it is also Louis

¹⁰¹ "Archives Parlementaires", Paris, series 1, vol. 48, p. 115.

¹⁰² Twiss op cit, p. 109.

¹⁰³ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, "Paris Pendant la Révolution (1789–98), ou, Le Nouveau Paris", Paris, 1862, p. 125. On the previous page Mercier claimed that the hand of Louis XV was given to the mythical survivor of the Bastille, Latude. I think that Mercier could not resist the delicious irony of Latude owning a likeness of the hand that had signed the *lettre de cachet* that left him imprisoned for so long.

XVII. This man looked at me astonished with an air which appeared to me less sad." Thus, the letter emphasised that the iconoclasm was the symbolic rejection of monarchy *per se*, rather than of Henri in particular, indicating a belief that images helped to perpetuate the power relationships that they represented.

According to an English visitor to Paris, there was also some connoisseurial concern over the destruction of the statue of Henri IV. He wrote, "All the amiable and popular qualities of Henri IV will not save his statue on the Pont-Neuf from the same fate. To the amateurs who lament over this as barbarous and gothic, it is answered, 'Art will perhaps moan, but for this masterpiece lost, liberty will produce a thousand'".¹⁰⁴ An American visitor to Paris also shared this concern over the loss of objects that he and no doubt many people valued on aesthetic and historical grounds. "Lewis the 15th", he wrote, "finest monument in all Europe is now Demolished and breaking him up in pieces every man that can provides with part of his remains".¹⁰⁵ This particular commentator seems concerned not only with the loss of a fine monument, but also the allegedly unregulated preservation of the debris. However, it is difficult to prove or disprove whether or not private individuals appropriated bits of the statues of kings' debris as souvenirs. Certainly, one of the hands of the Louis XIV statue was taken by the Section de la Place Vendôme, in whose square it had stood, and given to the neighbouring Section des Marseilles, in thanks for their assistance during the battle of 10 August.¹⁰⁶ The gift of a hand was clearly meant to signify the forced transference of all royal sovereignty to *le peuple*. Thus, one of the Parisian sections was still using part of the debris of the statues of kings to make a political point. In fact, the fragments of the statues that were not removed by private individuals seem to have been dealt with by various official bodies. This situation probably caused the CoM some concern, but by the time they convened the debris had largely been dispersed.

The iconoclastic decree of 14 August 1792 had included a clause that said the destruction of the statues of kings ought to be supervised by two members of the CoM, the minister of the interior and two members of the Commission of the Armies.¹⁰⁷ Clearly, each of these supervisors had different agendas that the minister of the interior had to arbitrate. On the grounds that the bronze from the statues could be cast into canon, it is likely the

¹⁰⁴ Anon op cit, "A journal during a residence", p. 77.

¹⁰⁵ Chew III op cit, pp. 32–33.

¹⁰⁶ Anne M. Wagner, "Outrages: Sculpture and kingship in France after 1789", in Anne Bermingham and John Brewer (eds.) *The Consumption of Culture 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*, London, 1995, 301.

¹⁰⁷ Tuetey op cit, "Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 1, p. 116, n. 1.

army commissioners wished to see all the debris systematically taken to Roule to be melted down; privileging the objects' material value. However, several fragments of the statues of kings were saved from the Roule crucible because of their historical or aesthetic merit. Some of these pieces of debris simply remained in the Roule store and they were included in an inventory in An III.¹⁰⁸

However, in the aftermath of 10 August, the established chain of revolutionary authority broke down and this had implications for the preservationist efforts of the CoM. On 29 October 1792, the minister of the interior, Roland, told the National Convention that the Commune of Paris was no longer reporting to the Department's directorate and that the municipal Administration of Nationalised Goods was especially guilty in this respect.¹⁰⁹ The CoM was also angry about this situation and Roland received a letter from them, on 20 September, complaining that the Administration of Nationalised Goods had suspended the removal of all objects from suppressed ecclesiastical buildings. The CoM was also concerned that soldiers billeted in nationalised buildings were not being prevented from causing "degradations".¹¹⁰ On 22 September, the Commission wrote to Roland again to say that the paintings in the chapel of the Sorbonne must be moved immediately. Roland was warned that the space was full of "our brothers in arms who do not all have a love nor a taste for the arts, and who often amuse themselves by piercing paintings with the cut of a bayonet, under the pretext that they represent aristocrats."¹¹¹ The soldiers simply did not value the objects in the building in the same way as the CoM. While Roland was eager to point out the ineptitude of the Administration of Nationalised Goods, the CoM was becoming impatient with the minister himself. Before he took action the commission wrote to him about the Sorbonne twice more, on 6 November and 2 December. In its second letter the commission declared, "The iconoclasts camped in the Sorbonne, commit excesses everyday; not only have they taken down a lot of the bronze ornaments attached to the pilasters and to the altars, they have also scratched and mutilated, with thrusts of their bayonets, the statue of Cardinal Richelieu."¹¹² It was not until February 1793 that the goods finally arrived in the depot. Roland, however, was also angry at the Parisian sections, reporting that they were being taken over by "audacious" radicals who had no regard for the correct way of doing things.¹¹³ He concluded that, "the confusion of

¹⁰⁸ A. N., F13 503II, doc. 379.

¹⁰⁹ Roland, "Rapport du ministre de l'Intérieur à la Convention Nationale; Sur l'état de Paris. Du 29 Octobre 1792, l'an premier de la République", Paris, 1792, p. 13.

¹¹⁰ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 6 (number 3 of the Legislative Assembly), Doc. 2389.

¹¹¹ Ibid, Doc. 2392.

¹¹² Tuetey op cit, "Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 1, p. 126, n. 1.

¹¹³ Roland op cit, pp. 15–16.

powers in Paris is quite evident",¹¹⁴ noting that this situation was manifested in the iconoclastic "dilapidations" that were taking place in the Tuileries gardens.¹¹⁵ Thus, the minister of the interior used iconoclastic incidents to illustrate the power struggles between levels of government: he associated unregulated iconoclasm with governmental disorder.

I have found evidence of the collapse in the chain of revolutionary authority relating to the statues of kings but, interestingly, it serves to illustrate incorrectly administered preservationist inclinations in the sections and not iconoclastic ones. Judging from a manuscript document, dated 11 Ventôse An II, it would appear that the Section d'Henri IV neither sent the bas-reliefs from the statue of Henri IV to the font, nor surrendered them to the CoM for official triage in 1792. Rather, the section stored the sculptures in their own buildings. When the revolutionary committee from the section finally surrendered the bas-reliefs to the CoM, they justified having kept them for so long by making reference to the preservationist agenda championed by the commission. They declared, "The five bas-reliefs were going to be taken to the crucible but we kept them because they are nearly two centuries old and they have become national antiquities: they record useful customs, they record interesting victories. While the principal heads have been broken, one could reestablish them in wax, and they retrace the way in which war was made at that time as well as the state of sculpture produced then".¹¹⁶ However, given the doubts that this section reported having had when deciding whether or not to overthrow the statue of Henri IV, it seems possible that it actually kept the sculptures as a lingering mark of respect for the popular image of the popular king. Perhaps some of the *sectionnaires* were afraid that the bas-reliefs might fail the CoM's assessment procedure and be melted down, if this was their fear then it was entirely justified. While there is no evidence in the CoM minutes, or those of their successor body, the Temporary Commission of Arts (TCA), of where these bas-reliefs came from, the minutes do remark on their ultimate destination. On 25 March 1794, the commission ruled that "these bas-reliefs, already mutilated, are not precious enough to be conserved and can be taken to the crucible".¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 18.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 19–20.

¹¹⁶ A. N., F17/1272, dossier 2, no. 48.

¹¹⁷ Louis Tuetey op cit, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission Temporaire des Arts", vol. 2, p. 117. On 6 December 1792, Alexandre Lenoir had written to the Committee of Surveillance for the Section de Guillaume-Tell to say that he had been informed by one of their members, Boulland, that the section was holding the bas-reliefs from the pedestal of the statue of Louis XIV from the Place des Victoires. Lenoir requested that the section tell him when it would be convenient for them to bring the statue to the depot

In the course of our discussion of the aftermath of 10 August, it has been shown that some of the debris from the destruction of the statues of kings might have been preserved by private individuals, some bits were certainly conserved by Parisian sections and other pieces went to Roule where they were saved from the font or melted down into canons as the National Assembly had symbolically requested. However, Alexandre Lenoir's museum of monuments in the nationalised buildings of the Petits-Augustins, on the *quai* of that name was one other destination for the remaining debris. It was there that the left foot of the statue of Louis XV found a home until well into the next century.¹¹⁸ Two gentlemen with revolutionary cockades in their hats can be seen contemplating this fragment in Augustin de St. Aubin's drawing, "Déstruction de la statue équestre de Louis XV" (fig. 41). It would appear that, unlike other images of the destruction of the statues of kings, in his drawing St. Aubin was connoting the inevitable collision of the preservationist and iconoclastic tendencies in official revolutionary policy towards images. On the one hand, the artist shows workmen standing on top of the sculpture which is lying on the ground while they dismantle it. As in other prints of the felling of the statues of kings, workmen can be regarded as representing the triumphant *peuple*, their sovereignty rising above that of the king's. The dismantling of the statue connotes the dismantling of the sovereignty that the king had once been officially regarded as embodying. This is a register of meaning which points to the way that the statues had been used during the *ancien régime* and following 10 August, to publicise protests about legitimacy and sovereignty. Thus, the image connotes a mode of thinking about the statues' value that privileged function (and material) over form. But, on the other hand, the gentlemen and the raised arm of the sculpture of Louis XV that gestures imploringly towards them, connote the need to preserve at least a fraction of the object. Thus, an entirely different mode of assessing the value of the statue is also represented, one that privileged aesthetic and historical value. The preservationist gentlemen are positioned in the margins of the image, while a workman with a hammer stands right in the middle. Was St. Aubin commenting on the marginalisation of preservationist efforts following 10 August? Was the artist implying that the sovereignty of the people meant that arts policy had to pass muster with them and that because they did not value art in the same ways as preservationists, a diminishing amount of art could be saved? One can only say that such

des Petits Augustins. It was almost a month later that the section's commissioner of hoarding and a police commissioner finally arrived with the sculptures. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 13.

¹¹⁸ Mercier op cit, "Paris pendant la Révolution", p. 124.

an interpretation of the image was available to its audience, especially those who knew that the depicted foot had been preserved.

Tension between the different ways of valuing images of kings continued to cause problems throughout the rest of 1792. In October and November, the CoM was still not sure what to do with the sculptures of kings and royal inscriptions that remained in Notre-Dame. The discussions that took place between the local section, the municipality, the CoM, and the minister of the interior, clearly indicate the administrative problems caused by August's iconoclastic decrees. On 8 October 1792, members of the CoM, the sculptors Mouchy and Boizot, joined a representative of the Section de la Cité to write two separate inventories of Notre-Dame.¹¹⁹ Together they were "particularly charged to watch over the conservation of precious monuments which could serve as proper models in favour of the progress of the arts". The *sectionnaire's* inventory said that the statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV on either side of the master altar should be removed, noting that the arms of the king on the floor before the master altar were also a "consequential work". The *savants* agreed, saying that the statues of kings were amongst the best works by the artists Coysevox and Coustou le Jeune. However, they expressed doubts about the removal of the royal arms of France that were laid in coloured marble in the floor. Saying that a removal operation would be expensive, they suggested simply covering the floor with a carpet. Both inventories noted a vast number of "attributes of feudalism" that needed to be suppressed throughout the church, including emblems of crowns and thrones. But, in some respects, the CoM's inventory went further than that of the section. For example, they called for the removal of the wooden balustrade that separated the choir from the nave, saying that then the whole building could be opened up so that "the office could take place under the eyes of all the citizens". Clearly, at issue here was a desire to make the ministrations of the constitutional clergy as transparent as possible, separating the priests from the people implied the superiority of the former and this was contrary to the principle of equality. It was also "in order to recall the principle of equality" that the section asked for the suppression of the bishops' thrones from the *boiseries*, but they do not seem to have envisaged the removal of the whole composition. In fact, the section specifically asked that two of the bas-reliefs remain in place, but the *savants* pointed out that such a preservation would not be possible if the nave were to be opened up. Thus, a conflict of interest can be seen in the inventories.

¹¹⁹ A. N., F17/1036A.

However, the real problem was the role that the section envisaged itself playing in the triage and the way it was using the discussions to its own advantage. On the back of the Section de la Cité's inventory was a letter asking when the municipality was finally going to pay money it owed to the section for sending volunteers to the front. In this context, the section's demands, regarding the removal of various pieces of art, could take on a new meaning; were they just another way for them to remark on the slowness with which the Commune was responding to the important matter of combating royalism? Impatience was clear in the section's comments about the gallery of kings that stood above the cathedral's portal. "Kings in stone badly sculpted," they wrote, "colossal with their scepters and crowns etc. Very difficult work to do and very expensive. Put simply, here is my insight, one must suppress them absolutely. And I am sure that what I ask for is a definite decision, despite the means of overcoming the expenses that this work is going to occasion." The section had been waiting for months for measures to be taken against royal imagery on the inside and outside of their meeting place and they wanted to see action soon. Indeed, the same point could be made with regard to the statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV beside the master altar. Their destruction had been decreed on 14 August, along with all the other statues of kings. It had been on that day that Rolan, a grenadier from the Minimes' battalion, had written to the National Assembly, calling for the suppression of the two statues and the festival known as the "vow of Louis XIII".¹²⁰ In fact, the statue of Louis XIII, like the sculpture in the cathedral, served as a memorial to that king's dedication of the French nation to the Virgin Mary, indeed, the statue was often referred to by the same name as the festival which celebrated the same oath. The other sculpture beside the master altar marked the fact that Louis XIV later took the same vow. In 1791, Louis XVI had repeated a similar oath.¹²¹ The National Assembly agreed to Rolan's call and the festival did not take place as planned on 15 August 1792. But the statues, like the gallery of kings, still survived at Notre-Dame during the winter of 1792, signifying that the cathedral's holiest spot was royalist and, by implication, non-juring.

The local *sectionnaires* might have been inclined to think that the authorities were failing to enforce their own iconoclastic decrees because they were not fully committed to the end of royalty. The CoM's argument that the gallery of kings ought to remain in place because its removal "could spoil the ensemble of the decoration" and would prove to be

¹²⁰ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 4, Doc. 3845.

¹²¹ Bernard Plongeron & Robert Pannet (dirs), "Le christianisme populaire, les dossiers de l'histoire", Paris, 1976, p. 188. Louis XIII made his declaration on 10 February 1638. Marcel Marion, "Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles", Paris, 1968, p. 459.

very expensive could not have diminished this impression.¹²² To the *sectionnaires* the argument might have seemed like a dangerous prioritising of form over function, dressed up in an excuse they had rejected regarding the shortage of funds. Furthermore, the commission had also asked whether some of the feudal and royal epitaphs could simply have the offensive titles removed and be “left as purely historic monuments, on which decrees cannot have retroactive effect”.¹²³ Thus the commission, representing the power of the municipal and national governments over images, was obviously arguing for the preservation of objects, on aesthetic and historical grounds, that the section wished to see removed because of their political functions. The Commission actually recognised this tension as being a problem in a letter written to the minister of the interior, Roland, on 16 November 1792. They said that the statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV must be removed because the pair “most shocks the gaze of patriots. During this operation, which will be fairly long, spirits will calm down and one can then advise, after more reflection, on the means of suppressing the other sculptures without starting trouble.”¹²⁴ But the section’s hostility to this defense of royal imagery, contrary to the will of the local people, and anger at the tardiness of the municipality in its general business and specifically with action regarding the royal images, led to an iconoclastic response in Notre-Dame.

On 4 December 1792, the CoM noted that in the cathedral “the day before yesterday one of the electors smashed a white marble plaque that had an inscription which had the name of Louis XV on it”.¹²⁵ Having completed the inventories, the CoM had been trying to establish what they were to do with royal imagery in Notre-Dame. The procurer of the Commune had written to them about the matter on 6 November,¹²⁶ but it seems to have been referred to the minister of the interior, Roland, who wrote to the commission on 26 November. He granted the CoM permission to remove the statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV and various other objects not including the gallery of kings. By the time the inscription to Louis XV was smashed in Notre-Dame, the CoM had authorised the *marbrier* Scellier to carry out the work “without delay”, but he had not yet begun.¹²⁷ However, the local *sectionnaires* had started to take matters into their own hands in a way that was entirely consistent with Roland’s observations, discussed above, regarding “radicals” in the sections causing a “confusion of powers”. The section’s actions must

¹²² Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 1, p. 143.

¹²³ A. N., F17/1036A.

¹²⁴ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 1, p. 143.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 142.

¹²⁷ Ibid., vol. 1, p. 150.

have further infuriated Roland and reinforced his impression of a dangerous collapse in authority. He had noted in his letter of 26 November that the section, by even asking for the destruction of any monuments in Notre-Dame, had broken the laws of 13 October 1790 and 16 September 1792, which placed monuments under the surveillance of the national and municipal bodies. In short, the section, despite the lip service paid to the aesthetic value of monuments in its inventory, seems to have been using the royal images in the cathedral principally as a way of attacking the revolutionary authorities, whose huge workload meant they were enforcing iconoclastic legislation slowly. Thus we can see that images of kings continued to be resources for protests about legitimacy and sovereign power long after the definitive iconoclastic decree of 14 August, only the protests were now between different levels of revolutionary government. Furthermore, different ways of valuing the objects caused additional conflict between revolutionaries.

4.5 Royalist and Catholic responses to the iconoclasm of 1792

It is certain that many Parisians were deeply alienated by the treatment of the statues of kings after 10 August 1792. The king was in prison, but his total removal from power and his trial and execution were not foregone conclusions and considerable royalist sympathy survived in the city. For example, on 18 August, Laurent Grillot was arrested in a cabaret on the corner of Saint-Honoré and rue des Boucheries. He had been shouting that he “knew only of his king, that he drank to his health, and that he did not recognise the National Assembly, that all its members were rogues and sought only to enrich themselves.”¹²⁸ What is more, these kinds of views were receiving some publicity, despite the fact that the royalist press had gone to ground after 10 August. On 21 August 1792, the police commissioners of the Section du Contrat Social that met in St. Eustache reported the seizure of 3 royalist *affiches* from Nicholas-Louis Mansard.¹²⁹ Other royalist resistance to the revolution of 10 August was more institutionalised. For example, on 4 October, a citizen reported to the Section du Luxembourg’s police commissioner that he

¹²⁸ Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, vol. 5, Doc. 3676.

¹²⁹ Ibid., vol. 6, Doc. 90.

had overheard three cavaliers from the *Ecole Militaire* speaking on the boulevard Montparnasse. They were saying that, “they fucked the nation which was going to put the king on trial and that they served the king”.¹³⁰ It can only be imagined that such royalists were aghast at the destruction of the statues of kings and would probably have sympathised with the sentiments of an English visitor, writing in 1792, who expressed relief that at least the gallery of kings above the portal of Notre-Dame remained intact.¹³¹ This point of view could hardly contrast more with that of the Section de la Cité.

Royalists, like the radical *sectionnaires*, sometimes reported the destruction of the statues of kings in highly symbolic ways. For example, de Vassière wrote a private letter saying that on 11 August *le peuple* “took forty horses to the statue of Louis XV and did not have the power to dig it up. When they saw they were not going to reach their goal by the means of horses, they cut off the feet. It is in this manner that it is, at this moment, on the ground along with those of Louis XIV and the Henri IV.”¹³² Thus, the iconoclasm served as a metaphor for royalist resistance to the political changes in Paris – the statues denied the people heroically. Furthermore, iconoclastic motifs were occasionally used in royalist prints to represent the counter-revolution. For example, a print called “Le degel de la nation”, shows the power of royalty, represented by the sun marked with *fleur de lys*, melting a statue of liberty erected by *sans-culottes* on a pile of excrement (fig. 42). Leading revolutionary figures desperately try to cool the statue down to save it from the onslaught of royal power, but to no avail. Another print from this time, published in Augsburg, also used a combination iconoclastic and excremental motifs (fig. 43). In the bottom right hand corner of this image that catalogues the alleged crimes from 10 August, one can see a lady and a gentleman looking at the debris from a smashed up sculpture that looks very like Bouchardon’s statue of Louis XV. Another man squats over the remains of the statue and shits on them. Royalists, as well as their enemies, were using words and images imbued with iconoclasm to re-present and imagine the revolution.

The use of royal images as resources for protest, and the legislation that followed the violence of 10 August, also had serious implications for Catholic imagery. In part, this was due to the scope of the decrees made in late August, the Commune had ruled that all metal goods in churches were now supposed to be melted down. Considerable opposition met the Commune’s ruling, of 25 August, that church bells were to be sent to

¹³⁰ A. P. P., AA 166, no. 32.

¹³¹ Anon op cit, “A journal during a residence in France”, vol. 1, pp. 85–86.

¹³² de Vassière, “Lettres de “Aristocrats”, Paris, 1907, p. 536.

the crucible.¹³³ Mme Gomé, whose letter was read to the Section du Luxembourg's patriotic society on 4 May 1792, had warned that the removal of bells could lead to "a religious civil war at the same time that a foreign war is at our door".¹³⁴ Indeed, the measure did provoke conflict, if not a civil war. A French diarist of the period described the response in August 1792 by writing, "Crowds formed around the churches to prevent them from being plundered. Manuel, the procurer of the Commune, was obliged to issue the following proclamation: 'The highest form of religion is obedience to the law. The peoples' need has necessitated the confiscation of the superfluous bells'", each parish was to keep just two. On 29 August, the Commune had to order the sections to use force "to eject from the churches any person inclined to oppose the removal of the bells".¹³⁵ Such opposition to utilitarian revolutionary iconoclasm clearly compromised the loyalties of some pro-juring and pro-revolutionary Catholics. To many, the loss of bells and the mooted destruction of the remaining metal religious imagery must have seemed ungrateful. As Mme Gomé wrote in May, "Was [Catholicism] not the religion of the French before and during the formation of the constitution? Was it not under its auspices that it was made? Did it not serve as its base? Was it not this same religion which was always invoked against the nobles and the high clergy? What a triumph for them if they could have heard the deluge of impieties."¹³⁶ However, some pro-revolutionaries were suspicious of any claims that the revolution and a reformed Catholicism formed a simian circle. On the contrary, many Parisians would have agreed with Edmond Biré's diary entry for 26 November 1792, "'To abolish the Monarchy in France, you must first suppress religion'. These are the words of Mirabeau and they are very true. France is the work of kings and bishops; it was born and has grown up under this double influence. The Monarchical idea and the Christian idea have been so closely interwoven that it has become impossible to separate them. Such an attempt must be given up in the face of the certainty that France will not cease to be Royalist as long as it is Christian."¹³⁷ In the next chapter we will see how this view became more dominant in 1793, ultimately contributing to the proscription of all signs of Catholicism.

In late 1792, rather than oppose the destruction of metal religious imagery, some Catholics actually began to surrender it to the authorities as a way of signifying their

¹³³ Edmond Biré, "The Diary of a Citizen of Paris During the 'Terror'", London and New York, 1896, vol. 1, p. 149.

¹³⁴ N. A. F. 2705, no. 101.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 150, n.1.

¹³⁶ N. A. F. 2705, no. 98.

¹³⁷ Biré op cit, vol. 1, p. 149.

loyalty to the revolution. An English observer in Paris remarked that on 28 August, “Certain citizens brought to the bar [of the National Assembly] a silver statue of St. Roche [sic], ‘We have often addressed our prayers to our St. Roche (said one of them) against the political plague which ravages France – he has given us no answer – we imagine his silence may possibly be owing to his form; and therefore bring him to you, that he may be converted into specie; hoping that, in this new shape, he will better contribute to drive the perfidious race of our enemies out of France. This language was heard with applause by the Assembly and the tribunes and the Saint was conducted to the mint’”.¹³⁸ The language of the citizens did not cast any doubt upon the efficacy of invoking St. Roch *per se*, it just implied that, given the nature of their current prayers, melting the statue down might be what St. Roch wanted to happen before he would intercede. The Catholics in question had especial reason to make a symbolic surrender of a metal statue because they were members of the Confraternity of St. Roch, based in St. Sulpice.¹³⁹ Confraternities were traditionally closely related to royal authority because they had historically required the permission of the Crown to form.¹⁴⁰ Perhaps more importantly, all such “associations of piety” had been outlawed on 18 August.¹⁴¹ They were secretive associations that it was feared could serve as a cover for royalist and/or non-juring scheming. Theoretically, the goods of confraternities were inalienable, so the gift of the statue of St. Roch had extra resonance as a sign of loyal revolutionary generosity – it had not been compulsory.¹⁴² The ten visiting members of the confraternity of St. Roch were eager to emphasise their loyalty to the revolution as clearly as possible and criticised other confraternities for having been held by the “sacerdotal chains by which the French people have been enslaved by the defunct clergy”, i.e. Roman Catholicism. They declared that, since the Declaration of the Rights of Man, they had been members of the “confraternity of free

¹³⁸ Anon op cit, “A journal of a residence in France”, vol. 1, pp. 251–252.

¹³⁹ Anon, “Adresse présentée à l’Assemblée Nationale, par les membres de la ci-devant Confrérie de S-Roch à S-Sulpice. Le 28 août, 1^{re} 4e de la Liberté. Imprimée par l’ordre de l’Assemblée Nationale”, Paris, 1792.

¹⁴⁰ Antoine-Etienne-Nicolas des Odoards Fantin (Vicaire-Général d’Embrun), “Dictionnaire raisonné du gouvernement, des lois, des usages, et de la discipline de l’Eglise, Conciliés avec les libertés, franchises de l’Eglise Gallicane, Lois du Royaume, et Jurisprudence des Tribunaux de France”, Paris, 1788, vol. 2, p. 230.

¹⁴¹ Christin op cit, p. 247.

¹⁴² Fantin op cit, vol. 2, p. 230. The commissioners of the Section de la Butte des Moulins (*ci-devant* Section du Palais Royal) visited St. Roch on 21 August 1792 to complete inventory of the metal goods to be taken to the crucible. The sacristan told them that “in the church they had but one confraternity called the Holy Sacrament but that he did not know that you could not have them”. The commissioners went to the home of one of the confraternity’s members to question him. He insisted that the society had not used St. Roch since 1 July 1791. The commissioners did not confiscate the confraternity’s silverware found in the house, respecting its inalienability. N. A. F., 2667, no. 121.

men and we have sworn to die there”.¹⁴³ In effect, they were seeking to differentiate themselves both from royalists and non-jurors. Nor was this the first “association of piety” to initiate the iconoclastic treatment of their own imagery. On 27 August 1791, a group of women from Les Halles came to the National Assembly and said, “Formerly we were a guild, a confederation dedicated to the Virgin, patroness of France. In dedicating a cult to her, we had ornaments and silver plate in a treasure chest deposited in the church of the Sepulchre. Today we have no guild other than the French, no other confederation than patriots and no cult other than liberty. Hence, we consecrate to the defense of the Fatherland the funds of a rent contract, the silver, silver plate, and ornaments we have in a coffer. Since the Virgin is the protector of France, she will receive our self-sacrifice as fitting homage.”¹⁴⁴ Like the St. Roch confraternity, and unlike those who opposed the melting down of Catholic goods, these women actually regarded utilitarian iconoclasm as a kind of votive sacrifice – iconoclasm could have religious value.

Parisian sections also symbolically offered silver goods from their churches to the National Assembly, making a point about their patriotism that would be widely advertised by official *affiches* listing the weight of silver from each parish.¹⁴⁵ On 5 September 1792, representatives from the Section du Luxembourg went to the National Assembly to volunteer just such a *donne patriotique*. They surrendered to the crucible the silver statue of the Virgin, discussed in chapter 2. They said, “We thought that a silver Virgin would have a more happy influence in the cash box of the national treasury than in a niche in a church and we have brought this beautiful Virgin of gilded silver [...] that so pleases priests. We have also brought the effects that belonged to this parish, they consist of 266 marcs of silver and 37 marcs of vermeil. The statue weighs 292 marcs.” They added that they wanted to exchange this Virgin for the one from the Eglise des Carmes, saying, “Sharing all the French’s hatred of tyrants we are happy to think that this precious material, when converted into money, will not be sullied by the effigy of Louis XVI [applause]”.¹⁴⁶ What is particularly interesting about this example is the fact that the section asked for a replacement statue, albeit one with less material value because it was

¹⁴³ Anon, “Adresse présentée à l’Assemblée Nationale, par les membres de la ci-devant Confrérie” op cit.

¹⁴⁴ Anon, “Adresse des dames de La Halle à Assemblée nationale, séance du 27 août 1791, au soir”, Paris, 1791.

¹⁴⁵ For example: Anon, *Etat des vaiselles d’or, d’argent, & bijoux, reçus à l’Hôtel de la Monnoie [sic] de Paris, par Commission établie en vertu du loi du 28 Septembre 1792. Extrait du Procès-verbal de la dite Commission, jusqu’au 30 Novembre dernier*, Paris, 1793, A. N., F17/1032, dossier 2. Number 79 on this list is “The Virgin of St. Sulpice”. St. Eustache, only provided 4 m, 7, ounces, 7 gros in gold; 116 marcs, and 2 ounces of silver. Churches continued to surrender jewels in early 1793, the amounts given up by each church are listed in an *affiche* that is available in the archives. A. N., F17/1032.

¹⁴⁶ “Archives parlementaires”, vol. 49, pp. 374–375.

marble. By taking this course of action the section was able to signify to Catholics in the parish of St. Sulpice that it wished to protect their interests and valued them as revolutionary *concitoyens*. But this replacement statue was actually an object that connoted a further meaning because it came from the space where non-juring priests had been massacred just days before. Now it was to be moved to St. Sulpice, the very space where the order for the massacre had been given. As such, the sculpture was meant to signify support only for pro-juring Catholics, acting at the same time as a warning sign to non-jurors.¹⁴⁷ By granting the exchange of the statue from des Carmes and the silver statue from St. Sulpice, the National Assembly partook in this process of signifying support for pro-juring Catholicism. As the legislators declared on 30 November, following a motion by Danton, they had never intended to deprive the citizens of the ministrations of religion that the Civil Constitution of the Clergy had given them.¹⁴⁸ The use of imagery in a process of consensus building was especially important in the light of opposition to the destruction of Catholic imagery and the rather ambiguous signals the authorities were issuing to Catholics in other ways. For example, the municipality had refused to allow the symbolic presence of National Guards in the *Fête Dieu* processions, on the grounds that not all citizen soldiers were Catholics; the legislature had also ruled that people could work on the day of the festival.¹⁴⁹ These measures led to the mayor being stoned by a crowd in the Section d'Arcis.¹⁵⁰ Nor was the legislature's decision to ban all Christian festivals and make them days of work for public functionaries, popular among Catholics.¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, throughout late 1792, local and national authorities, as well as groups of individuals, were using the destruction of art to signify their loyalty to one another as well using imagery as resources to protest against each other. However, no consensus over the appropriate treatment of Catholic art could ever really be reached; whatever measures were taken, whatever concessions were granted, whatever gestures were made there was always opposition on political, religious and/or cultural grounds.

¹⁴⁷ It seems that the sculpture functioned for some non-jurors like a monument to the "martyrs" who had prayed around it before they were massacred in September 1792. Certainly, two non-juring ex-nuns were arrested in the church, in April 1793, when they were heard crying out that the statue ought to return to its proper home. Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 8 (number 1 of the National Convention), Doc. 524. The statue was eventually removed from St. Sulpice in 1794, arriving at Alexandre Lenoir's depot on 17 June 1794. "Inventaire générale des richesses" op cit, Lenoir's records for 17 June 1794.

¹⁴⁸ Alphonse Aulard, "Christianity and the French Revolution", London, 1927, p. 95. This same kind of point was made by allowing the parish of a replacement for a "curious" holy water container that the CoM had requested for the Museum of Monuments on 27 November 1792. Tuetey op cit, "Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 1, p. 153.

¹⁴⁹ J-F Robinet, "Dictionnaire historique et biographique de la Révolution et l'Empire 1789-1815", Paris, 1975, p. 202. A woman called Gillon complained about the measure in the Section du Luxembourg's patriotic society. N. A. F., 2705, no. 11.

¹⁵⁰ Adolphe Schmidt op cit, vol. 4, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 10.

Some revolutionaries thought that the government was not going far enough in its proscription of Catholic objects. For example, the Marquis de Villette wrote to the *Patriote Français* in late 1792 saying, “I denounce to you the imbeciles and rascals who have erected and painted a handsome new crucifix ten-feet high on the pont de Sèvres [...] I denounce the rascals who promenade their Good God in the rue Monmartre and who gravely bless the soldiers in the guardhouse”.¹⁵² It is extremely unlikely that people sharing such views would have been very tolerant of the re-signification of Catholic imagery as revolutionary. What would Villette have made of the kind of phenomena noted by Richard Twiss in 1792? The Englishman wrote, “I saw several statues of saints both within and without the churches (and in Paris likewise) with similar [red] caps, and several crucifixes with the national cockade or ribbons tied to the left arm of the image on the cross”.¹⁵³ What would Villette and his ilk have made of the co-existence of volunteer recruitment offices and Catholic art in churches?¹⁵⁴ No doubt such revolutionaries would have been rather more impressed by the total re-signification of Catholic space that was carried out by the Section du Luxembourg’s patriotic society. The club wanted the signifiers in their meeting hall to match its function unambiguously. On 18 April 1792, they decided to put up a table of the Rights of Man in the meeting room, similar to the one that Audouin *père* had donated to the guardhouse. The table was to be flanked by red bonnets and pikes, in accordance with a decree on the matter from 12 March. Audouin *père*, a member of the society, also offered to provide an engraving of Mirabeau framed by the national colours and 3 members were sent to hold discussions with Emery about the replacement of the religious paintings in the room.¹⁵⁵ Imagery played a vital role in signifying a wide range of complex patterns of loyalty in Paris.

Administering the preservation and/or destruction of imagery was enormously contentious and the authorities could not please all the people they represented. Different groups simply had irreconcilable ways of thinking about the value of images and/or the value of the subjects that they represented. For example, how could one possibly please both sides involved in the following conflict, described by Biré in his diary? He said that, on the day of her festival (2 November 1792) people flocked to St. Etienne-du-Mont, where Ste. Geneviève’s reliquary had been moved from the Panthéon. Biré wrote, “during the

¹⁵² Herissay op cit, p. 65.

¹⁵³ Twiss op cit, p. 12.

¹⁵⁴ Hamel op cit, p. 274. When *la patrie* was declared to be *en danger* the Section du Luxembourg’s committee set up such an office in the chapel of the Sacré-Coeur in St. Sulpice.

¹⁵⁵ N. A. F., 2704, no 151.

whole of today thousands of people have knelt before the coffin of the saint in fervent prayer, touching it with handkerchiefs, shirts and shrouds. On leaving the church I heard a *sans-culotte* addressing a crowd at the corner of the rue des Sept-Voies, and shouting: 'It is our fault; we ought to have thrown the bones into the river, and taken the coffin to the Mint!' Have no fear, brave sans-culottes; that will be done one of these days – very soon, perhaps. But even when the coffin is in the Mint, and the bones are in the river, the festival of Ste-Geneviève will still be celebrated in Paris as long as there is a single Christian soul – as long as one poor worker, faithful to the memory of the shepherdess of Nanterre, shall kneel before the image of the saint fastened by two pins to a whitewashed attic wall".¹⁵⁶ Biré's comments recognised that the ways in which Catholics thought about images, used them and valued them could never be abolished by iconoclastic decrees proscribing them in public spaces or by unofficial attacks on them. The same could be said of royalist imagery. The statues of kings had been removed from the public squares after 10 August and a concerted campaign had begun to destroy signs of royalty throughout Paris. But the scale of the re-significatory program meant that the process was long and slow; ultimately it could not prevent people from risking their lives by keeping images of royalty in their homes. For example, Jacques-Martin Ploquin was arrested in September 1793. This twenty-eight-year-old, a former superior of the seminary of St. Sulpice, admitted that he had fought with the royalist *émigré* army in 1792, before returning to Paris, where two young women harboured him. The decisive piece of evidence in the trial of this man who lived so dangerously was a print of the Dauphin, found in his room. Asked, "What interest do you have in this picture", Ploquin replied that he liked looking at it. Asked if he wished to see the Dauphin take the throne, he replied that he did. He was guillotined.¹⁵⁷ If anything, iconoclasm and/or the threat of iconoclasm encouraged non-juring Catholics and royalists to attach ever more value to threatened images.

¹⁵⁶ Biré op cit, vol. 1, p. 151.

¹⁵⁷ H. Wallon, "Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris, avec le journal de ses Actes", Paris, 1880, vol. 2, pp. 438–441.

4.6 Conclusion

Throughout the course of this chapter we have seen that, contrary to the claims of Christin (described in the introduction and chapter 3), the political value of imagery had not diminished during the eighteenth century. In fact, statues of kings which had been built to signify the relationship between monarchs and their people, were constantly being re-signified by royal subjects and later citizens, *because* the signs were understood to have political value. These re-significations took the form of words spoken, sung and written about the sculptures, *affiches* posted on them, additions of new symbols to their compositions or removal of other elements and, ultimately, to the statues' destruction and the re-presentation of their fall in prints. All of these means of signification could respond rapidly to word-based discourses relating to the statues' subjects, but the originally intended, official meanings of the statues themselves were signified using a fixed code that allowed for no such response. In a society where *le peuple* had few means by which to publicise their views on issues of legitimacy and sovereignty, the statues of kings offered a resource with which to signify such opinions more permanently than spoken words or violent acts would often allow. The treatment of the statues undermined the objects' intended meanings, turning the sculptures against their patrons. To this extent, the statues of kings, like religious imagery, were not considered to be autonomous from the shifts in discourses relating to their themes. Both types of imagery were understood to be involved in the struggles of the wider world, especially those relating to questions of sovereignty and/or legitimacy.

This chapter has shown that many Parisians did not consider sculptures' aesthetic or historical values as providing necessary or sufficient grounds for respecting physical integrity. Again, we detect a similarity to commonly held attitudes to religious art. When the statues of kings were destroyed, so as to signify the final victory of the sovereignty of the people, few Parisians saw any reason why such iconoclasm was unacceptable treatment of representational objects. Le Moine was in a minority of *sectionnaires* when, in 1792, he asked with a tone of regret, "How many more of the splendid riches of the luxurious monuments of the monarchy will be left to the same sort of fate to which the effigies of the monarchy were submitted?"¹⁵⁸ Some of the educated men of the National Assembly were concerned for the loss of aesthetically and historically valuable monuments, having long since established the CoM specifically charged with their

¹⁵⁸Le Moine (Citoyen de la Section Lombards), "Le Parallèle du Paris de la République avec le Paris des Rois", Paris, 1792, pp. 1-2.

preservation. Equally, the legislators recognised the potentially divisive nature of the iconoclastic attacks, but their choices in August 1792 were between facing division within France as a whole by destroying the sculptures of kings, or facing immediate and violent division within Paris by not destroying them. Preservation on the grounds of aesthetic and/or historical value simply was not the most pressing concern of *sectionnaires* nor, in the circumstances, of legislators. The result was a spate of iconoclastic policies that had immediate implications for all metallic art and for all royalist imagery at a time when loyalties were deeply divided. These policies sought to regulate unofficial iconoclastic actions and to provide some level of preservation in the face of opposition to out-right preservation and/or destruction. Shifting iconoclasm into the official sphere in this way did not end the function of signs as loci and foci of resistance between different interest groups. It simply meant that this function of imagery also became more readily available to competing revolutionary agencies. Ironically, official and unofficial iconoclasts and their opponents, seem to have shared an understanding of the mediating role of images in power struggles which came to be played out in the symbolic realm with increasing regularity in the course of the next two years.

Chapter 5

Iconoclasm in Paris, 1793–1795

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters in this study have contributed to the development of a framework that will allow me to offer a new interpretation of the systematic destruction of signs of feudalism, royalty and Catholicism during the period of the Terror. Once again, we will see that a wide variety of different political and religious interest groups used actual iconoclasm, threats of such activity, representations of it and preservation of images to mediate power relations. In section 5.2 this chapter will begin by considering the treatment of signs of feudalism and royalty in 1793. It will be argued that these types of images, especially those of royalty, continued to be used as resources for protest in arguments about sovereignty and political legitimacy between individuals, official and unofficial groups. Attention will be paid to the role that images played in the complex power struggles between the Parisian sections, the municipality, the National Convention and those who allied themselves with and/or against the various levels of revolutionary authority. As in the previous chapters, we will regularly need to return to the notion that the ways in which different people treated various types of imagery were contingent on the ways in which they traditionally valued art and not just upon political loyalties. In section 5.3 we will move on to consider the destruction of statues of kings in and outside Notre-Dame in late 1793. Then, in section 5.4 we will discuss the destruction of revolutionary signs, a subject that has not yet been integrated into studies on iconoclasm during this period. This section will show how such destructions are similar to other examples of iconoclasm previously discussed in this study. We will also be addressing a question posed by Mona Ozouf: was there a “transfer of sacredness” from the old set of imagery onto the new? It will be shown that, while the question has important implications for the treatment of art, it requires a carefully nuanced answer, because the “sacred” was a category that was in a state of paradigm crisis in this period.

Section 5.5 will focus on the treatment of Catholic imagery in Paris during the period of de-Christianisation. We will be asking how such iconoclasm came to pass in a city where a significant proportion of the population was Catholic and how such people reacted to attacks on religious images. In addition to exploring the tensions that de-Christianisation engendered between Catholics and non-Catholics, we will be considering how the

treatment of religious material signs affected the relationships between different groups of revolutionaries in the sections, the municipality and the legislature. As in the previous chapters, it will be shown that the question of how to treat religious imagery elicited a broad range of responses during the revolution and that iconoclastic actions and discourses, like the imagery attacked, were polysemic. I will argue that the destruction, removal, and/or alteration of Catholic art during these months can be regarded as having been attacks on Catholic modes of reception, as well as on the imagery itself. However, it will be shown that, far from being rabid “vandals”, many of those in government opposed the destruction of art not only because they thought it was aesthetically and/or historically valuable, but also on religious and/or political grounds. The discussion of de-Christianisation will detail the kind of work involved in “suppressing” proscribed signs and, as with section 5.3, I will be challenging the condemnatory historians’ attacks on sculptors and masons involved in the process.

In section 5.6, I will conclude the chapter by discussing post-Thermidorian responses to revolutionary iconoclasm, but I will avoid re-treading the ground that Wrigley and Bazcko have so competently covered with regard to post-Thermidorian discourse on “vandalism”. That is to say, my discussion will not cover Grégoire’s three discourses on “vandalism.” Instead, I will look at the reactions of Catholics and moderates to the changing political situation, and how their treatment of art objects altered accordingly. This section will end by showing that sectional authorities continued to use the treatment of art as a way of asserting their own legitimacy as loci of power.

5.2 Power struggles and the treatment of signs of feudalism and signs of royalty in 1793

Throughout the early months of 1793, the sections of Paris were divided within and among themselves. As the interior minister Roland had argued in his report the previous October, radical *sectionnaires* were exerting increasing influence and moderates were not attending assemblies in sufficient numbers to provide a counter-balance. Where moderates were active in the assemblies, local radicals organised delegations to visit

neighbouring sections that they considered more like-minded or threatened by moderates. In effect, an inter-sectional network was being formed that rivaled the municipality. The police commissioner Dutard, in a report to the interior minister, Garat, described the phenomenon as “a species of federalism established between *enragés*”.¹ For example, on 21 April, the Section des Lombards sent a delegation to the Section du Contrat Social that was meeting in St. Eustache. The Lombard’s guests bemoaned the divisive influence of royalists and aristocrats in their own section.² Their hosts thanked them for their republican zeal. The Lombard’s delegates used an iconoclastic metaphor in their address, saying that they wished to see the destruction of the “aristocratic hydra”, a symbol often used to represent the perceived enemies of the revolution. The Contrat Social orator also used a reference to symbolism in his response, saying that he was pleased to hear that the visiting delegates had succeeded in reintroducing the practice of having their president and secretary wear red bonnets in their sectional meetings. Clearly, the destruction and/or honouring of symbols were useful ways for *sectionnaires* to imagine the political struggles in which they were involved.

But the inter-sectional visits could lead to trouble. On 1 April 1793, radicals from other sections went to the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins and invited them to join a central revolutionary committee of *sectionnaires* planning to correspond with the 83 *départements*. The Butte-des-Moulins refused, saying that the committee could have counter-revolutionary pretensions and the National Convention should suppress it immediately.³ Indeed, in the middle of May, Dutard told Garat that the sections would soon form a new municipality and then they would become “masters of the situation”.⁴ He warned that the Convention must not instigate a proposed plan to suppress the *département* and municipality of Paris entirely, replacing it with six separate municipalities. This, he said, would prompt a coup and people would have to choose which side to join – possibly to the detriment of the Convention.⁵ While sections like the Butte-des-Moulins remained loyal to the Girondin dominated legislature, others were radical critics of both the Convention and its supporters. In May, the Section du Contrat Social repeatedly sent delegations from their to the moderate Section de la Butte-des-Moulins, assembled in St. Roch, accusing its members of being “royalists”.⁶ On at least

¹ Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, vol. 9 (number 2 of the National Assembly), Doc. 595.

² Ibid., vol. 8, Doc. 2184.

³ Ibid., Doc. 2260.

⁴ Ibid., vol. 9, Doc. 591.

⁵ Ibid., Doc., 620.

⁶ Ibid., Doc. 699.

one occasion a delegation visiting St. Roch threatened to burn it down.⁷ Churches were becoming sites for conflicts over sovereignty and political legitimacy between moderate and radical *sectionnaires*. In these spaces were material signs that represented the very institutions of aristocracy and royalty that *sectionnaires* often alleged that their opponents in the sections supported. As a result, the symbols within many churches were coming to be seen as increasingly incompatible with the spaces' functions.

In theory, "signs of feudalism" had been proscribed for years, as had "signs of royalism" since August 1792. However, in reality, removing the mass of symbols inside and outside of all the churches in Paris was a huge and labour intensive project. From my archival work, I am inclined to conclude that, in early 1793, the Commune's APW focused on suppressing the feudal and royal signs on religious buildings that no longer had a Catholic function.⁸ Efforts were also being made to remove royal signs from public squares and secular buildings, for example the homes of nobles. But an ambiguous order from the APW, dated 7 December 1792, was holding up this process because it mentioned coats-of-arms but not *fleurs de lys*.⁹ Nevertheless, sections were reporting the number and location of proscribed signs in their locales to the Commune, in order that action might be taken.¹⁰

Notre-Dame seems to have been the focus of a concerted effort of de-signification slightly earlier than other spaces that had dual religious and secular functions. Perhaps this was because the cathedral was the most prestigious church in the capital city. By carrying out the suppression of feudal and royal signs in that particular space the authorities could signal that action was being taken and would soon be taken elsewhere. Also, since the end of 1792, the local sectional assembly had been putting pressure on the Commune to get on with removing offensive symbols in the space and, as noted above, at least one reported iconoclastic attack had occurred as a result of the slow response of the authorities. The feudal signs that were removed were marble inscriptions that the CoM had reserved for preservation. The goods were taken down, sealed in plaster to protect

⁷ Ibid. On 29 May, a Police report from the Tuileries gardens also remarked that a female member of a crowd discussing politics had said that the citizens of the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins were the new Swiss Guards because they protected the tyrannical Convention and that they would face the same fate as their predecessors. Ibid., Doc., 670

⁸ For example, on 11 January 1793, the sculptor Daujon suppressed "coats-of-arms and other signs of feudalism in the *ci-devant* Church of Saint Pierre de Chaillot". On 23 July, he suppressed "religious signs at the *ci-devant* Church of Magloire. A. N., F/13/967.

⁹ M. R. F. 89. 2/2.

¹⁰ For example, in a manuscript document the Section du Louvre reported, in January 1793, that there were no coats-of-arms in their section that required suppression. M. R. F. 89. 2/1.

them and driven to the depot des Petits Augustins in two carriages. This job was completed by 27 May 1793.¹¹ Early in June, another set of marble and bronze inscriptions were taken from one of the chapels, moved by hand onto nine carriages and transported to the depot.¹² Although this work was carried out earlier than similar efforts in other churches, in reality, it dealt with only a tiny fraction of the inscriptions, paintings and sculptures in Notre-Dame that bore proscribed signs and, under the law, had to be moved, altered or destroyed. There are two explanations for this. Firstly, the work was being undertaken at the behest of the CoM and, therefore, concerned only objects that were to be preserved and not those to be altered or destroyed by the APW's workers. Secondly, the entrepreneurs paid to do the job hired the transport required and, as the invoices for both jobs note, carriages were particularly expensive at this time. No doubt the high cost of transport can be attributed to the state of war: carriages were in short supply because the armies in the east and the west needed them to keep supply lines open. Thus, one can partly attribute the delay in enforcing the destruction of proscribed signs to the practical problems of resource management in a time of foreign and civil war.

From 29 May to 2 June 1793, radical *sectionnaires* mobilised in Paris and forced the expulsion of the moderate Girondins who had dominated the legislature and had equivocated on the issue of regicide.¹³ It was only after this coup that the legislature pressed for acceleration of the suppression of signs of feudalism and royalty. On 4 July, a decree was passed by the Convention that charged the municipality of Paris with creating a special committee of four members of the CoM and six delegates of the Commune of Arts to remove attributes of royalty from all civil or religious public monuments.¹⁴ But action was slow and, as late as Germinal An II, the minister of the interior reported to the *départements* that the Committee of Public Safety (CPS) and the Convention were receiving complaints on a daily basis about the survival of "marks of feudalism and royalty".¹⁵ Yet, even before the Convention's ruling, the APW began to step up its de-signifying efforts in St. Eustache on 1 July 1793.¹⁶ One could argue that this action was taken because the municipality wanted to diffuse the tensions that divided the Section du Contrat Social, setting many of its members against Convention and

¹¹ A. N. F/17/1050.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ They had demanded an *appel au peuple* in order to shift responsibility from the Convention and on to the people (an effort to placate provincial royalist anger with the Convention if it was decided to execute the king).

¹⁴ Tuetey op cit., "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 1, p. 245, n.3.

¹⁵ A. N. F/17/1032, dossier 18.

¹⁶ A. N., F/17/1262

Commune alike. The municipality used the political and material value of the representational objects in St. Eustache to signify the authorities' hatred of feudalism and royalism, as well as a determination to mobilise the resources available for the city's war effort, i.e. metal objects.¹⁷ By the 29 July, the APW had given the order for increased action to be taken in suppressing all signs of feudalism and royalty throughout Paris.¹⁸ Two days earlier, Daujon had been instructed to begin suppressing signs in St. Roch, where the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins met.¹⁹ But other spaces, such as St. Sulpice, where the Section du Luxembourg sat, were left unaffected until the start of the programme of de-Christianisation in An II. Perhaps this inaction can be explained by the fact that meetings in St. Sulpice tended to be peaceful, nobody accused the Section du Luxembourg of "royalism" or of having aristocratic sympathies and, as such, it was less urgent to remove signs that could provoke such accusations.

The invoices that Daujon made of his work in St. Eustache and St. Roch are interesting in many respects. For example, we can deduce from these documents how the authorities had managed to defuse anger over the presence of proscribed signs pending definitive action against them. Inscriptions and coats-of-arms had been covered in plaster to hide the offending symbols.²⁰ In St. Roch, Daujon, whose work provides us with an important case study, charged the APW for removing the plaster from 27 inscriptions. He also suppressed many coats-of-arms, "feudal inscriptions" and royal signs "by chisel".²¹ In his invoice for St. Roch, Daujon mentioned 53 sets of signs that are altered and it should be noted that some of these entries actually referred to multiple suppressions. Sometimes he would enumerate exactly how many signs he had destroyed; for example, noting that he suppressed 48 *fleurs de lys* on the copper crosses attached to pillars in the church, another 18 *fleurs de lys* on three iron crosses and still more on a wooden cross. With similar precision he added that, in one of St. Eustache's chapels, he had suppressed 394 *fleurs de lys* in the panels of the altar and on the pilasters.²²

¹⁷ The CoM had little choice but to broadly surrender to such logic, but they still voiced concern on the grounds of art's aesthetic and historical value. For example, in May 1793 they put pressure on the minister of the interior to warn the minister of public contributions that his administrators must consult with the CoM before throwing any silver goods into the crucible. A. N., F/17/1032, dossier 12.

¹⁸ A. N., F/13/962.

¹⁹ A. N. F/17/1262.

²⁰ Souchal notes that the committee formed of members of the CoM, TCA and APW mentioned plastering over signs on an unspecified date during the summer of 1793. They declared that, "The brevity of time has not permitted the total removal of the signs of royalty, so the commission is forced to cover them provisionally in plaster. Do not believe citizens, that this will be a pretext for conserving the marks of slavery, the patriotism of artists is too well known". Souchal op cit, p. 105.

²¹ A. N. F/17/1262.

²² Ibid.

However, often he simply stated that he suppressed “the coats-of-arms” or the “inscriptions” without saying how many. Nevertheless, one begins to get an idea of the huge amount of material signs that needed to be dealt with, and also the fact that so many of them, unsurprisingly in a church, were elements within religious compositions. For example, in St. Eustache Daujon removed crowns from the tops of crosses in one of the chapel’s arcade and from the altar of another. He suppressed proscribed royal letters and figures from the pedestal for a statue of the Virgin Mary, coats-of-arms from tombs and destroyed the crown on the head of a statue of St. Louis. These are merely a selection of examples from a total of 61 separate sets of symbols that Daujon worked on in St. Eustache; we could just as well have chosen a sample set from St. Roch.²³ In all these cases, Daujon altered symbols and, in the process, created new indexical signs that, to those who knew of the changes, physically represented the defeat of feudalism and royalism but also pointed to the historical association between these discredited paradigms and Catholicism. Nevertheless, the political value of the objects to revolutionaries had been increased.

Daujon had no qualms about stating that he thought that some of the representational objects he worked on lacked redeeming features. In his St. Roch invoice, he wrote that in one of the chapels he had “unsealed and removed [...] all the ornaments in lead and the epitaphs. All were in the worst taste”. Nevertheless, he noted at the end of the same document, “I have carried and arranged in a chapel all the marbles, bronzes and lead to ensure that nothing is lost or broken”. He added that he later transported them to the depot des Petits Augustins. Daujon took similar measures in St. Eustache and moved 13 copper items to the depot. However, according to the surviving documents, none of these objects had actually passed the CoM’s triage and, as such, Daujon had acted on his own initiative. Perhaps he simply assumed that the triage could then take place in the depot, but this process of removals was expensive and rising costs could cause problems. Although no records survive of Daujon being reprimanded for acting without proper authorisation in the cases discussed above, one of his invoices for de-Christianising work ordered by the APW a year later does include a critical note written by one of the municipal regulators who checked such claims. The note said that Daujon “believed it to be his duty to include in his work the [...] total removal of monuments and marbles which had on them the proscribed signs [...] because this operation was becoming

²³ The suppression of signs of feudalism continued in St. Eustache in September 1793 when a window painter, Lerouse, removed 13 panels with coats-of-arms on them from the “large windows of the choir” and replaced them with panels dedicated “to reason”. Lerouse carried out similar work in the chapels but on a smaller scale. A. N., F/13/962.

indispensable, especially in those of the churches which had been applied to a particular employment”.²⁴ The problem was that monuments whose signs were altered or destroyed *in situ* were the responsibility of the APW. Objects removed for preservation were chosen by the CoM, and later the Temporary Commission of Arts (TCA), and moved at the expense of national government. Daujon had, in effect, carried out his own triage during work ordered by the municipality, removing objects that he thought warranted preservation on aesthetic and historical grounds, but which had not been explicitly chosen by the preservationist commissions. He then submitted the bill to the Commune, whose administrator sympathised with the sculptor’s motives but recognised the preservations as not having been ordered by the national commission, thus causing friction over which body would pay. Daujon’s decision to use his own initiative cannot be explained by his unfamiliarity with the relevant procedures. He was one of the Commune’s administrators and he must have known all too well the rules to be followed by entrepreneurs in its employ.²⁵ As noted in the introductory chapter, Gautherot and Souchal have criticised Daujon for lacking respect for the work of previous artists. In fact, Daujon was prepared to face official criticism in order to protect objects that he thought were in danger because they were located in spaces with secular functions.²⁶

Daujon was also eager to emphasise that he had left the objects that he altered in good condition, repainting the wood and making sure that the compositions’ elements *ragrée*, or “re-agreed” with themselves, forming a new but aesthetically coherent whole. Far from being a man who had no respect for the work of previous artists, as Souchal and Gautherot have claimed, Daujon repeatedly stated in all his invoices that he took “great care” in his work. For example, in St. Eustache he noted that on the “two tribunes either side of the altar, I have suppressed the wooden *fleurs de lys* and royal signs, and re-agreed them all with care in order to avoid damaging this beautiful *boiserie*”. Such efforts by Daujon served to limit possible opposition to his work that might have come from those *sectionnaires* or agencies that valued art on aesthetic and historical grounds, ensuring that members of the CoM did not complain to the APW about Daujon’s competence. After all, for an administrator and active *sectionnaire* like Daujon who, so far as we know, received no commissions for his own sculpture in this period, the suppression work that he was involved in formed a major part of his income. In a letter

²⁴ A. N., F/17/1264, dossier 3. Invoice regulated in June 1794.

²⁵ Daujon’s status as an “administrator” and “member of the Commune of Paris” was repeatedly noted by Alexandre Lenoir. For example, “Inventaire des richesses” op cit, p. 106 & p. 126.

²⁶ In Daujon’s defence it should be noted that, unusually, Lenoir praised him for the particular care that he took in transporting art to the depot and the sculptor was never criticised by the authorities for the quality and care of his work. Ibid, p. 163.

asking for more work from the TCA, in An II, he wrote that before the revolution he had spent 20 years in the serious study of art at the Academy, but he had been dedicated only to the cause of the revolution since its start. He added that, "I have forgotten that a mother, a wife and children owe their existence to me", showing his good credentials as a father and his honest need for money.²⁷ As he noted in a letter written to the interior minister post-Thermidor, requesting an indemnity payment, Daujon was paid in revolutionary *mandats* whose value diminished rapidly.²⁸ Daujon's point about inflation offers a useful repost to Gautherot's accusation that the sculptor was driven by cupidity. Gautherot said that Daujon's invoices were always regulated downwards, which is as true for him as it is for all other sculptors, masons and scaffolders in the public pay at this time. I am inclined to think that many of these workers submitting invoices were trying to build an inflation-proof buffer into their requests. They were not suffering from cupidity but from a genuine fear that their earnings would become worthless by the time they had gone through a process of administration that sometimes took more than a year.²⁹ What is more, given the long wait for payment, many of the entrepreneurs must have been borrowing money to pay their day-labourers, meaning that interest rates also had to be covered in the final settling of accounts. As it happens, the authorities were no more sympathetic to this problem after Thermidor than they had been before. But we can see that, while Daujon's care in his work might have been partly motivated by the common need of artists to guarantee income, it was not necessarily indicative of the sculptor's cupidity.

Although Daujon's work seems to have been tempered by his respect for the arts, it appears to have been motivated by his radical politics and not just the need for money. He was an artist who clearly felt the need to serve the revolutionary cause. Post-Thermidor Daujon was arrested but quickly freed after interventions by the municipal architect Poyet, the Section du Faubourg du Nord and the Section du Bondy's sixth battalion of National Guards.³⁰ In a letter pleading for his freedom Daujon gave an

²⁷ A. N., F/17/1264, dossier 5.

²⁸ A. N., F/13/901, dossier 4. The minister of the interior refused.

²⁹ As Scellier noted in a demand for back payments in An III, "the intrinsic value of the materials must be estimated at one million two hundred and two thousand livres, and by reason of the value of the *assignat* during the period of the demolition and transport of the marbles; now it must be doubled". He adds, "One can affirm that the payments made for the work in question [...] have not cost the nation a 24th of the value of the objects demolished, transported and arranged in the depot and the museum of arts." A. N., F/17/1053, dossier 3.

³⁰ For Poyet's letter see: A. N., F/7/4662, no 10. The Section du Faubourg du Nord is signed by Le Sueur, possibly the landscape painter who was involved in Lenoir's museum of monuments. Ibid., no. 9. For the National Guards letter see: Ibid., no. 5. For another letter see: Ibid., no. 11.

account of his loyal, dutiful and law abiding revolutionary career. "Since 1789", he wrote, "I have not ceased to serve liberty. I did my service in person every time I was not *en fonction*. I presided over the Section du Nord and of Bondy in stormy times, and these sections were always in good voice. I was the *commissaire rédacteur* of the three famous addresses of the month of July 92 on degeneracy. On the night of 10 August, I was presiding over the Section du Bondy and I called all the citizens to the defense of liberty. I was named first commissioner on that famous night. I was at the Temple as a municipal officer when they brought the head of Lamballe.³¹ I prevented them from killing the tyrant, I wanted him to die on the scaffold and I accompanied him there as a soldier. I was in the *départements* in September 92 to call the citizens to the communal defense. [...] As a municipal officer I signed the petition of 31 May [1793] against the 32 [Girondin representatives ejected from the Convention]." Nevertheless, in such times of moderate reaction, when having been a member of the Commune and an iconoclast were potentially dangerous, Daujon chose an uncontroversial ending, "I occupy myself with nothing but the arts, my profession, during which I was arrested by my revolutionary committee on 15 Thermidor. I am making a statue of liberty [...]. The fatherland has hardly any better friend, I have sacrificed everything for it, I ask to be allowed the liberty that I have so many times risked my life to defend".³² In this context, one imagines that Daujon took a certain pride in combating feudalism and royalism in the symbolic realm, removing signs that perpetuated memories of the *ancien régime*.

One can speculate that, unless they actually were royalists, *sectionnaires* meeting in churches in which feudal and royalist signs were being definitively suppressed were probably as pleased as Daujon to see the last of the symbols removed. In effect, the spaces' meanings, as they were signified by their use by red-bonneted and cockade-wearing revolutionaries, were no longer being challenged by the grandiose old signifiatory schemes. In fact, in St. Roch, Daujon did not simply de-signify signs of feudalism and royalism, he also explicitly re-signified at least one of them as unambiguously revolutionary. He noted in his inventory that "from a tiara I have made a bonnet of liberty" In section 5.5 we will see that Daujon adopted this re-signifying approach more frequently in the coming months. What is more, active revolutionaries

³¹ Daujon seems to have taken a fairly humane attitude to the royal family while he was partly responsible for their detention. On 30 May 1793, he authorised the purchase of a book, "Gil Blas de Santillanc" for 12 livres, as requested by the "detainees". Tuetey op. cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 10 (3 of the National Convention), Doc. 33. He was present at the interrogation of Princess Marie-Thérèse, Princess Madame Elisabeth and Marie-Antoinette on 7 October 1793. Ibid., Docs., 154 & 155.

³² Ibid., no. 7.

were going out of Paris into the surrounding towns to ensure that the de-signification programme was progressing there too. Danjaid, a member of the Section du Luxembourg's patriotic society, took considerable pride in the role he played in the suppression of signs. Towards the end of the first month of An II, he reported to the society on his work in and around Versailles during the summer of 1793, comparing his political activism to the inaction of the local administrators. He wrote, "I made disappear from all the churches the marks of royalty and feudalism which were found in them due to the feebleness of the municipal officers".³³ Questioning peoples' support for the destruction of proscribed signs was a way of challenging their revolutionary credentials, a way of encouraging greater activism. When the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women (SRRW) visited the Commune on 24 July 1793, principally to call for measures against the hoarding of charcoal, they challenged the municipality to signify its revolutionary activism by ordering iconoclastic action. The women called for the Commune to command the removal of the effigy of the king from *assignats*, the revolutionary paper money.³⁴ The women's logic was interesting: they claimed that the image of the king encouraged a sense of "preference" that might somehow encourage hoarding, indicating the faith the women had in the power of material signs to influence peoples' behaviour. Yet, even in the churches in which sculptors and masons like Daujon had been at work during the summer of 1793, signs of feudalism and royalty survived and occasionally elicited complaint from revolutionaries. For example, an observer, Ronbaud, wrote to Garat, on 26 September 1793, to say, "The emblems of feudalism are still visible in the Chapel of the Virgin in St. Eustache on the mausoleum on the left of the door onto the rue Montmartre".³⁵ And, as we will see in section 5.3, some very prominent signs of royalism survived until the autumn of 1793.

However, royalists were still to be found in the sections and they would almost certainly have been encouraged by the survival of signs that marked the old power of institutions that they supported.³⁶ Royalist images continued to play a role as rallying points for such people as is evidenced by the fact that, in December 1793, Joubert, who ran the famous Piliers d'Ors print shop, was arrested for selling copper plates depicting Louis XVI and

³³ N. A. F., 2705, no, 354.

³⁴ Marie Cerati, "Le Club des Citoyennes Républicaines Révolutionnaires", Paris, 1966, p. 82.

³⁵ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 9, Doc. 1426.

³⁶ As late as February 1794, Mme Découste, whose husband was a member of the sectional committee of the Section de la Montagne that met in St. Roch, had heard a group of people singing in the street. The song went, "We don't recognise, in detesting the law/ anything but love of the virtues of the empire of kings" Ibid., Doc. 188.

his family.³⁷ Clearly, Joubert would not have been taking the risk if a market had not existed for such material, and the fact that he was selling plates suggests that others might have been using them to print images and distribute them. Thus, one can conclude that revolutionaries' paranoia about a possible royalist counter-revolution in Paris and about one another's convert royalist sympathies, were not unfounded. It was in this context that the suppression of signs of feudalism and royalism was accelerating during 1793. It is not difficult to imagine that peoples' responses to this programme were partly contingent on their political allegiances. However, as we will see in section 5.5, those who valued art in terms of its aesthetic and/or historical value did continue to complain about the danger in which they perceived art in churches to be. But, such complaints tended not to refer to the actual suppressions carried out by the authorities but, instead, to damage caused unofficially.

5.3 The destruction of statues of kings at Notre-Dame

Despite the suppression of signs during the summer of 1793, the gallery of kings above the main entrance to Notre-Dame remained in place, a small consolation to royalists (fig.44).³⁸ The sculptures' presence aggravated radicals, who wished to see them destroyed. Chaumette, a member of the Commune, announced his anger at this situation in an article called "Signs of Royalty to efface" in the *Révolutions de Paris*, published in July 1793.³⁹ He wrote, "soon a republican will be able to walk through the streets of Paris without running the risk of wounding his eyes with the sight of all these emblems and demeaning attributes of royalty that were sculpted or painted on nearly all public buildings and private houses. We must work tirelessly to make these repulsive images

³⁷ Ibid., Vol. 10, Doc. 1488. This particular print shop bought traded prints with Letourmi, the famous print-maker from Orléans. Musée des Beaux-Arts, "Images de la Révolution: l'imagerie populaire orléanaise à l'époque révolutionnaire", Orléans, 1989.

³⁸ Réau has pointed out that the 28 figures that made up the gallery were, in fact, representations of the kings of Judaea and not France. The themes had been wrongly attributed throughout the eighteenth century. Réau op cit, p. 293.

³⁹ Ibid.

disappear, gothic monuments to the servitude of our fathers.” “Without doubt”, he added, “we must not forget to decapitate more or less all of the kings of stone that overload the portal of the metropolitan church”.⁴⁰ By labeling the sculptures as “gothic”, in a pejorative context, and saying that they “overloaded” the portal, it seems that Chaumette was anticipating the possibility of them being defended, on aesthetic grounds, as they had been by the CoM at the end of 1792. In an invoice for the work he had carried out in September 1793, Scellier noted that he had chiseled an inscription into the paving of Notre-Dame’s sanctuary that also sought to anticipate and counter potential connoisseurial concern. It said, “Under the reign of the Law, Liberty has made disappear that which wounded the eyes of Republicans, and has conserved this paving out of respect for the arts”.⁴¹ Like Chaumette, Scellier was asserting that action against politically unacceptable signs did not entail disrespect for the arts. In fact, the gallery of kings was left untouched following Chaumette’s article. It was only in early September, when the Section de la Cité wrote a letter to Commune saying that it wanted the signs of royalty and feudalism around the outside of Notre-Dame to be suppressed, that action was finally taken.⁴² It is entirely possible that the section was responding to the news that Toulon had fallen to the royalist British army and the Convention’s subsequent ruling, on 2 September, that “Terror” was the order of the day. Daujon was authorised to employ the “entrepreneur of buildings”, Bazin, to go ahead with the work around Notre-Dame. He began on 10 September and finished on 4 October.⁴³ With the help of two masons and an aid, Bazin erected a 50-foot high scaffold so that his work at the front of the church could be carried out. They then suppressed the signs of royalty on the figures of kings, leaving the bulk of the sculpture in place.

Even after Bazin had made alterations to the gallery of kings, it would seem that demands for their total destruction continued. On 23 October 1793, the Commune ruled that “within eight days, the gothic simulcra of the kings of France which are placed at the door of Notre-Dame will be brought down and destroyed”. They said measures had to be taken against “all monuments that recall the execrable memory of kings”.⁴⁴ Once again, the sculptures were described as “gothic”, adding the label “simulcra” suggested they

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 293–294.

⁴¹ F/13/968, no. 471.

⁴² A. N., F/13/966, no. 100.

⁴³ Erlande-Brandenburg says that Bazin acted on the orders of Daujon, a point that is misleading. All such suppressions were carried out on the orders of APW; Daujon was merely delegating work that had actually been prompted by *sectionnaires*. Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, “Les sculptures de Notre-Dame de Paris récemment découvertes”, Paris, 1977.

⁴⁴ Le Moniteur, (25 October 1793)

were mere likenesses that had no other merit as art. A “master mason and entrepreneur of Paris”, Varin, was charged with removing the statues. In his invoice to the APW he wrote, “From the Gallery once called that of kings, at the height of the first order of the door, I removed 28 figures of hard stone, each 10 feet high”.⁴⁵ Varin added that the figures were “mutilated” to ease their removal (the metal fixing them to the building had to be cut out) before they were “thrown onto the *parvis*”. Once the statues were down, the pavement had to be mended because the impact had caused considerable damage. Care had been taken to avoid causing similar damage to a little shop “occupied by a wig-maker” just under an adjacent door.⁴⁶ The statues were then piled up on the *parvis*, where they remained as indexical signs of the downfall of the monarchy. It was not until March 1796 that the municipal architect, Poyet, finally ordered that they be moved.⁴⁷ It seems that a well-known royalist, Jean-Baptiste Lakanal, managed to acquire the statues from the entrepreneur charged with their removal. Certainly, it was during building work in 1797, in the basement of a house that had been built for Lakanal in 1796, on the rue Chaussée d’Antin, that 21 of the 28 heads of the kings were found, along with 343 other fragments of sculpture also wrapped in plaster for protection.⁴⁸ It would seem that Lakanal knew the sculptures were not going to pass the triage to enter one of the republican museums, so he put his own private preservationist project into effect. As a royalist, he was probably relieved simply to see the statues removed from a public square where they had long been available as targets for republicans. If Louis-Sébastien Mercier is to be believed, before their removal from the *parvis*, the debris had been used as a public convenience by some Parisians; defecating on the statues clearly signified contempt for their subjects.

There had been an official plan, proposed by the painter and *conventionnel* Jacques-Louis David, for dealing with the remaining fragments of the statues of kings. In November 1793, he proposed the construction of a huge allegorical statue of *le peuple* to stand on top of the debris of the statues of kings on the Pont-Neuf, where Henri IV’s equestrian sculpture had stood. David’s own entry won a competition held for the design of the monument.⁴⁹ In his address to the Convention, which passed a decree supporting the project, David praised both the iconoclastic action of the Commune against the gallery of

⁴⁵ A. N., F/13/962.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ “Les sculptures de Notre-Dame”, op cit.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The design used words written on the various parts of the body to clarify the meaning of the sculpture to the audience, i.e.: “strength” was to be written on the arms. This use of words echoed the traditional practice of posting *affiches* onto statues, assimilating and pre-empting the practice into the composition, signifying the popularity of the sculpture.

kings and the laws of the Convention that supported it. Thus, this iconoclastic statue raised to the sovereign people could be erected in thanks to both sets of authority. The monument was being used as a means consensus building, a point that David emphasised when he said “the statue, by its fusion, will be a symbol of unity”.⁵⁰ Like other revolutionaries, David undermined the aesthetic value of the statues of kings used as the base, referring to them as “gothic effigies”.⁵¹ He also called the proposed statue a monument, but said it was to be built on the “debris of the idols of ignorance and superstition”. Thus he attacked the way in which he imagined “idolaters” had used the sculptures of kings and, as we will see in section 5.5, such language was highly charged in this period of de-Christianisation. Furthermore, he said it was the “terrible and revolutionary judgement of posterity” that decided the sculptures were of no historical value except as indexical signs that signified the defeat of tyranny by *le peuple*. The new sculpture was to give monumental form and legitimisation to the increasingly common, iconoclastic ways of imagining and constructing the revolution. It also gave physical form to the claim that the revolution destroyed art, but that liberty inspired French artists to replace the lost pieces with more enlightened images. But, as with so many of the monumental projects of the revolution, a change of régime occurred before the statue was built.⁵²

Following the decree, the CoM was charged with employing the *marbrier* Scellier, who had been chosen by the minister of the interior to collect debris to serve the purpose described by David’s decree. The sources of the debris were not to be limited to the statues from the gallery of kings.⁵³ The minister of the interior also asked the CoM to supervise Scellier, to make sure his triage was good.⁵⁴ In the closing days of 1793, Scellier presented himself to the APW to ask for a location to store the pieces of suppressed statuary that he had selected for the colossus.⁵⁵ However, his request seems to have caused some discomfort to the administrators. They had to tell Scellier that as soon as the decree had been passed, being eager to execute it as soon as possible, they had employed a municipal architect to assemble and put on reserve all the debris that would be needed. There had been a doubling up of responsibilities because both national

⁵⁰ M-J Guillaume, “Procès-verbaux du Comité d’Instruction Publique de la Convention Nationale”, Paris, 1893, Vol. 2, p. 806.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Details of other projects supported by the national government during An II can be found in: A. N., F/17/1038, dossier 7.

⁵³ A. N., F/13/202, dossier 6, no. 2.

⁵⁴ Ibid, unnumbered document.

⁵⁵ A. N., F/13/1935, dossier 68.

and municipal authorities wished to show their eagerness to get on with a project that signified their desire to commemorate the sovereign people. The Department of Paris had to write to the minister of the interior to explain the confusion and it was agreed that Scellier would “work in concert” with the municipal architect.

Apart from the destruction of the gallery of kings and the earlier suppressions of signs of feudalism and royalty carried out in May, a great deal of other de-signification/re-signification work was going on in Notre-Dame during 1793. The fact that so many different sets of work were carried out gives us an idea of the sheer scale of the job that iconoclastic decrees had created. When Bazin had removed signs of royalty from the gallery of kings in September 1793, he had also gone on to remove feudal emblems from the front of the *Archevêché* which, he noted, “actually serves the revolutionary committee” of the Section de la Cité. He then covered the signs in plaster before Daujon used the scaffolding to put up a “piece of leather and a bonnet of liberty”, clearly re-signifying the space as revolutionary.⁵⁶ Similarly, Varin’s work at Notre-Dame had not been limited to the gallery of kings: he also suppressed 400 *fleurs de lys* inside the church, many requiring scaffolding over 15 feet high, as well as similar signs from the *Archevêché*.⁵⁷ What is more, “with a touch of oil paint” Varin had 6, 258 *fleurs de lys* concealed on the “36 great windows of the nave up to the point of the choir”.⁵⁸ Then, given the advent of de-Christianising decrees, discussed in section 5.5, he went on to remove around 100 other sculptures from the outside of the church. Earlier in the year, Scellier and a carpenter-mechanic called Boucault had also been at work in Notre-Dame, at last dealing with the statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV beside the master altar. Boucault built scaffolding and cranes to lift the statues from their pedestals and then left them nearby in the church, probably in the sanctuary where other sculptures were stored.⁵⁹ From 2 February 1793 until 16 February, Scellier was occupied in “undressing” the statues’ pedestals.⁶⁰ That is to say he was removing the marble that covered them, a job that he supervised to make sure that “degradations were avoided”; members of the CoM verified that he achieved this goal.⁶¹ Confusingly, Boucault’s invoice for removing the statues of the two kings to the depot des Petits Augustins was dated as “December

⁵⁶ A. N., F/13/966, no. 100.

⁵⁷ A. N., F/13/962.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ That is to say that he left them in them in the marble store mentioned by Scellier in the previously cited document, A. N., F/13/968, no. 471.

⁶⁰ A. N., F/17/1038, dossier 2.

⁶¹ The sculptors Boizot and Mouchy acted as inspectors along with Bourdon.

1792”.⁶² But, in November 1793, an inventory of Notre-Dame, written by members of the CoM, stated that both of the statues were still in the church.⁶³ In fact, the work was probably done in December 1793 because, in an invoice from 24 September 1793, Scellier noted that he had been charged with transporting the sculptures of the two kings to the depot, a job he evidently delegated to Boucault.⁶⁴ Clearly, despite the Section de la Cité’s eagerness to see their meeting place emptied of royalist imagery in late 1792, the task was nowhere near complete until the end of 1793. However, the statues of the two kings had, at least, been removed from their pedestals to signify that they had been disgraced, remaining *in situ* as indexical signs of the monarchy’s fall from prominence.

However, Bazin, Varin, Scellier, Boucault and Daujon were not alone in their work in Notre-Dame. At least one other man was also leading, or trying to lead, a team working in the cathedral. In the CoM’s meeting of 16 December 1793, a letter was received from Daujon saying that Citizen Bellier had been having trouble carrying out demolitions that the commission had ordered him to do there.⁶⁵ Then Scellier arrived at the meeting to say that he had been to Notre-Dame to do some “demolition work”, only to find Varin already occupied with it. He had unsuccessfully suggested to Varin that they might finish the task together. Then Bellier had arrived in the church and claimed that the job was his. Scellier demanded to know who was to do the work. One of the members of the commission noted that the situation had, indeed, got out of hand, saying that Boisser, the commissioner of hoarding for the Section de la Cité had decided to suspend all work in Notre-Dame until the CoM explained itself.⁶⁶ This *sectionnaire* must have been exasperated, he and his colleagues had been waiting over a year to see a concerted effort to enforce the iconoclastic laws in their meeting place and then, when action was finally taken to meet their demands, the building was inundated with competing workers who expected Boisser to mediate in their arguments. Somewhat embarrassed, the Commission declared that they had never told Bellier that he had any role to play in Notre-Dame other than transporting demolished monuments in the name of the municipality and not that of the CoM. However, they now said that Bellier could also move objects put on reserve by

⁶² A. N., F/17/1038, dossier 3.

⁶³ A. N., F/17/1272, dossier 2, no. 13. The inventory mentioned that the equestrian statue of Philippe le Bel was also still in Notre-Dame. This seems to suggest that Aubert was wrong to say that Marseillais had decapitated it at the same time that the gallery of kings was being demolished. Marcel Aubert, “La cathédrale de Notre Dame de Paris”, Paris, 1909, p. 35. A metal statue of this king had been removed from Notre-Dame in August 1792. Braesch op cit, p. 389.

⁶⁴ A. N., F/17/1036a

⁶⁵ Tuetety op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 2, pp. 111–112.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

the commission to the depot, but not from Notre-Dame. Scellier was told that he could continue with his work – presumably Varin had to make way for him.

The “doubling of powers” shows not only the scale of the work involved in de-signifying spaces in the light of iconoclastic decrees, but also the fact that the relevant authorities were struggling to stay in control of the whole process. After all, there were no precedents for this scale of suppressions, organised by such a rash of inter-locking agencies. Suppression and demolition work was complex and expensive. But, these projects must also have had a kind of proto-Keynsian impact on the Parisian economy. Much-needed work was given to dozens of masons, sculptors, entrepreneurs, scaffolders and carpenters and they were not averse to trying to “gazump” one another. All the confusion in their meeting places must have further annoyed *sectionnaires* and, as I will argue in section 5.5, some of them might have been tempted to take iconoclastic matters into their own hands when faced with a chaotic and slow response from the municipal and national authorities. Certainly, the sections continued to put pressure on the municipal and national authorities and refused to co-operate if it so suited them. Equally, as we will see in sections 5.5 and 5.6, when suppressions were carried out a mass of debris was often left in churches that were being used as assembly halls. This caused further conflicts between section, municipal and national agencies. Nevertheless, by the end of 1793 considerable amounts of royalist and feudal imagery had been removed from the major churches of St. Roch, St. Eustache, and Notre-Dame. Similar work had been going on in numerous other churches and public buildings at the same time. As we must constantly remind ourselves, it was not by any means popular with all Parisians, whether their opposition was political, connoisseurial or, increasingly towards the end of the year, religious.⁶⁷ Yet, slowly but surely, the balance of signifying images in the capital’s churches and streets was shifting towards revolutionary signs. However, such representational objects were not necessarily safe from iconoclastic attack at a time when this mode of treating images was a widely used as an official and unofficial resource for protesting political legitimacy and sovereignty.

⁶⁷ For example, work had begun on transforming the bas-relief of Louis XV at the gate of the dentistry school into an allegorical sculpture representing the “virtues of humanity” by its original sculptor, Berruer. A. N., F/13/962, dossier 165

5.4 Iconoclasm and revolutionary signs

Material signs mediated political struggles between revolutionaries and perceived counter-revolutionaries, but also between factions within the broadly revolutionary sections. This was not only the case with signs of feudalism and royalty in and around Paris, but also with revolutionary symbols. Of course, conflicting revolutionary groups and institutions sought to signify their revolutionary authority and legitimacy with symbols – signs marked political distinctions but also commonalities. For example, the Commune, perceived by some in the Convention as a dangerous focus for the opponents of the legislature, and among radical *sectionnaires* as too moderate, used revolutionary symbols to signify its loyalty to the rule of law when it accepted the new Constitution on 4 July 1793. An allegorical statue of wisdom was placed on a kind of stretcher draped with a tricolore flag, surrounded by old people and children.⁶⁸ The *ensemble* signified the Commune's recognition of the wisdom of the Constitution but also the wisdom of accepting it, together guaranteeing the future of the nation, as represented by the children. Also present at the ceremony were women dressed in revolutionary sashes carrying a banner that read, "Citizenesses, give the fatherland children, their well-being is assured." Thus, the ceremony signified the appropriate social and political role of the women bearing the revolutionary signs, offering a clear contrast to the militant political activism of the SRRW. The SRRW had marched through Paris in battle order on 26 May, wearing red bonnets, carrying a revolutionary flag and shouting their support for radical factions: "Down with the 12! Long live the Montagne! To the guillotine with the Brissotins! Long live Marat! Long live Père Duchesne!"⁶⁹ Thus, revolutionary symbols could signify consensus between factions/institutions and the struggles between them. This could lead to iconoclastic conflict that was remarkably similar to examples discussed previously in this study. Two particularly clear sets of examples can illustrate this point. The first pertains to the role of revolutionary symbols, especially cockades and red bonnets, in the struggles of the SRRW against its critics, particularly the market women of les Halles; the second relates to busts of Marat that were being inaugurated throughout Paris in the second half of 1793.

Confrontations over cockades were nothing new in 1793. Pressley has written that the market women of les Halles had been motivated to march to Versailles, in October 1789,

⁶⁸ Cerati op cit, pp. 98–99.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 51–52.

partly because they had heard that royal soldiers had insulted the revolutionary badge.⁷⁰ In early 1793, a police observer reported that a young man had been arrested for trampling a cockade underfoot outside Notre-Dame.⁷¹ As has been noted above, republicans in Paris were factionalising in 1793, and it is in this context that the symbols used by the SRRW became points of conflict. The SRRW were relatively radical, for the most part they supported Marat and the Montagne during the struggle against the Girondins. But, by August 1793 the SRRW increasingly felt that even the Montagnards were too lenient on the enemies of the republic to be able to protect the nation, the clubbists also criticised the lack of action being taken by the Convention against profiteering hoarders.⁷² Key members of the SRRW gradually shifted their allegiances towards the *enragés* Roux, Varlet and Leclerc who called for major economic intervention by central government to keep prices low enough for the Parisian poor to afford.⁷³ These political allegiances, especially their economic implications, set the SRRW on a collision course with the local market women of les Halles who worked near the society's meeting place in the ossuary of St. Eustache. After all, the market women stood to profit from rising prices and did not enjoy having aspersions cast on their patriotism, especially when they had played a key role in the founding revolutionary events of 1789. But also at issue was the market women's belief that public political life ought, normally, to be the realm of men. The activism of the SRRW was resented and the conflict soon came to be orientated around revolutionary signs.

On 21 September 1793, the observer Latour-Lamontagne reported to the minister of the interior. He said, that "fermentation on the subject of the cockade, especially among the women of les Halles" had been taking place.⁷⁴ The SRRW had long since been calling for all women to be obliged to sport the badge of the revolution and had tried to force other women to wear cockades.⁷⁵ As a male observer put it, wearing cockades "inspires in women the desire to share the political rights of men. When they have the cockade, they [the women of les Halles] say, they will demand civic cards, want to vote in our assemblies, share administrative positions with us – and from this conflict of interests and opinions there will result a disorder unfavourable to our projects. One must, however,

⁷⁰ William L. Pressly, "The French Revolution as Blasphemy. Johan Zoffany's paintings of the Massacre at Paris, August 10, 1792", London, 1999, p. 17.

⁷¹ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 9, Doc. 1352.

⁷² Darline Gay Levey, Harriet Branson Applewhite, Mary Durham Johnson, "Women in Revolutionary Paris 1789–1795", London, 1979, p. 172.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Similar trouble was reported on the same day by the observer Rousseville in the Place des Victoires. Ibid., pp. 199–201.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 197.

give justice to these women [of les Halles]; generally, they evince the most profound respect for the national representation; they refuse to wear the cockade because the law does not order it. 'Let the Convention speak' they say, 'and we shall execute whatever decree it issues'".⁷⁶ The Convention took the reports of such trouble seriously and passed a decree on the matter the day they heard of the "fermentations" on the subject. They said that "women who do not wear the tricolor cockade will be punished with eight days' imprisonment for the first offence; in case of a repetition, they will be deemed suspect; those who tear a national cockade away from another or desecrate it will be punished with six years of confinement".⁷⁷ However, trouble over the cockade did not recede.⁷⁸ The market women had been defying the iconophilia exhibited by the SRRW towards the badges, they continued to resent the SRRW and iconoclastic language and action followed in the next month.

As the market women reported to the Convention the following day, on the morning of 28 October 1793 the SRRW had been trying to force them to wear red bonnets.⁷⁹ That day a large crowd gathered when the SRRW met in the ossuary of St. Eustache "at 11 a.m. with their symbols – an eye of vigilance, a flag and four pikes".⁸⁰ Members of the audience began to scream, "Down with red bonnets! Down with Jacobin women! Down with Jacobin women and the cockades! They are scoundrels who have brought misfortune on France!" The shouts were iconoclastic in implication and when the justice of the peace arrived with guards to restore order he insisted the women remove their bonnets in an effort to defuse the situation. The *Révolutions de Paris* claimed that the justice then declared the meeting over and said everyone could enter, "At this point a crowd of countless numbers of people came into the room and heaped the filthiest abuse upon the members. They pounced upon the symbols: the eye of vigilance, the flags and the pikes. They wanted to break everything into pieces. The citizenesses [of the SRRW], unfaltering in the midst of danger, not wanting to abandon their symbols, were struck and most shamefully attacked. Preferring to become victims of a people led astray, thinking no longer about their own persons but rather about imposing respect for the figure of

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 199–201.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 197.

⁷⁸ A woman was verbally assaulted by three others in the Section de Guillaume Tell on 28 October 1793 for not wearing a red bonnet. The assailants attempted to remove a cockade that the victim was wearing. Ibid., pp. 205–208.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 213–217. On 29 October, the Commune's Committee of Public Safety ordered that 1000 *affiches* be posted around Paris explaining that the riot of 28 October had been caused by revolutionary women demanding a decree that all women wear trousers and red bonnets. Tuetey op. cit, "Répertoire", 10, Doc. 641.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 209–212.

Liberty represented by the flag, one of them cried out ‘Massacre us, if you like, but at least respect the rallying point of all Frenchmen.’ The citizeness in charge of the flag turned to the judge. She said, ‘I place it in your hand. You will answer to me for it with your life’”.⁸¹ Some of the SRRW were then chased into the street and beaten, others hid in St. Eustache among the assembled revolutionary committee of the Section du Contrat Social. The clubbists had to sneak out of a side entrance of the church to avoid being attacked by the crowd.

There is a valid comparison to be drawn between the iconoclastic attack in the ossuary of St. Eustache in 1793 and the hanging of the statues of the Virgin outside the Théatins in 1791. Back in 1791, the statues had been hanged by a crowd that probably included Catholics, certainly by a crowd that was protesting in favour of Constitutional Catholicism and against Roman Catholicism. Pro-jurors attacked the statues of the Virgin because they were connected to a non-juring space and, as such, to the politically and religiously illegitimate practices that took place there. The grounds on which the statues were normally valued (i.e. religious) were temporarily suspended, allowing them to be used as an iconoclastic resource for protest and publicity. In 1793, the crowd that tried to smash the symbols of the SRRW was made up of people who were to be heard shouting, “Long live the republic!” – these were revolutionaries attacking revolutionary symbols.⁸² But the flags, the bonnets and the pikes that they were attacking were being used as signifiers in a space that was associated with a political group who were seen as being politically illegitimate; women who were deemed to have no right to play so active a role in the public political sphere, women who cast aspersions on the patriotism of the market women. As such, there was a suspension of the grounds on which the symbols’ physical integrity was normally respected and they became targets for iconoclasm and resources to publicise protest. The value of the imagery was not principally assessed in terms of its aesthetic and/or historical value, so there was no reason not to destroy it once the political reasons for respecting its physical integrity had been undermined. By de-signifying the space, it was re-signified as being in the control of legitimate revolutionaries. As with all of the other incidents of iconoclasm discussed so far in this study, one of the goals of the iconoclastic attack on the SRRW’s symbols was to match the meaning of the space as it was signified by its use, with the meaning of the space as it was signified by its symbols. Rather like the logic of Catholics who surrendered their own statues to the crucible in the

⁸¹ Darline Gay Levey *op cit*, pp. 213–217.

⁸² *Ibid.*

aftermath of 10 August 1792, paradoxically, the iconoclasm in the ossuary was motivated by respect for the type imagery attacked.

Another kind of revolutionary symbolism elicited different responses in 1793 to those we saw in the set of examples just discussed, but would eventually provoke iconoclasm. I am referring to the busts of revolutionary martyrs and, in particular, those of Jean-Paul Marat. Both Montagnard and Girondin members of the Convention had accused Marat of rabble rousing in his newspaper *l'Ami du Peuple*. Despite the fact that he had joined a majority of representatives of the people in the legislature in condemning interventions in the chamber by *sectionnaires* as potentially compromising the Convention's sovereignty, Marat was still a target for Girondins who feared him. On 13 April 1793, Girondins *conventionels* impeached Marat for allegedly signing a Jacobin circular that incited, "murder, pillage and dictatorship and attacks on the sovereignty of the Convention".⁸³ To the joy of radical *sectionnaires* Marat was acquitted by the courts, making him an unambiguous hero of anti-Girondin factions. But that is not to say that Marat was, therefore, a straightforward man of the Montagne. In fact, the Montagnards had failed to mobilise their deputies in the Convention to counter the impeachment of Marat. While this can be partly attributed to the fact that many Montagnards happened to be *en mission* in the provinces, it was also because many of the Jacobin members of the Montagne were not keen to support a man whom they regarded as a dangerous and uncontrollable demagogue.

Marat was less than popular in the provinces, even among the natural constituency of the Montagne, the Jacobins clubs. Emmet Kennedy has noted that few Jacobin societies subscribed to Marat's newspaper outside of Paris.⁸⁴ By mid-June 1793, Montagnards in the Convention were aware that Marat could, if he turned against their policies, initiate another popular intervention against the legislature in the way he had supported action against the now expelled Girondins. He was popular among radicals in the sections, especially those who felt their first loyalty to be to the Commune, or those who thought that the legislature needed to be watched carefully. As for the more moderate *sectionnaires*, for example those in the Butte-des-Moulins, they saw Marat as a potential danger to the authority of the Convention, an important counter-balancing institution to the radical aspirations of many Parisian *sectionnaires*. In this context, it is scarcely surprising that when Marat was assassinated by a royalist called Charlotte Corday

⁸³ A. Patrick, "The Men of the First French Republic", London, 1972, p. 110, n. 10.

⁸⁴ Emmet Kennedy, "The Jacobin Clubs in the Revolution: the Middle Years", Guilford, 1988, p. 180.

reactions were by no means unambiguously mournful. As Thomas Crow has noted, Robespierre went to the Jacobin club on the day after the assassination and “coldly disparaged the idea of any ceremony at all in Marat’s honour”.⁸⁵ He knew that no consensual love of Marat existed in Paris. To show respect or disrespect for the memory of the journalist-*conventionnel* was bound to alienate large portions of Paris and, indeed, France. But if the Montagnards led by Robespierre in the Convention stood aloof from the mourning of Parisian radicals, they would arouse suspicions in the sections. On the day of the assassination, 13 July, the Section du Contrat Social had, for example, immediately responded by calling on Jacques-Louis David to “take up his brush for a new painting [of Marat] that remained for him to do”.⁸⁶ Opinion on the assassination was divided in Paris and the reaction of the more radical *sectionnaires* was to demand that images be produced promptly to immortalise Marat.

It is clear from the Convention’s minutes for 25 July 1793 that the Commune had taken prompt action to use imagery to signify its support for radical *sectionnaires* disturbed by the death of Marat and by the response of those pleased about his assassination.⁸⁷ On that day, the sculptor Beauvallet addressed the Convention saying, “Charged by the Commune of Paris, of which I am a member, to transmit to posterity the traits of the immortal republican Marat, I ask the legislators to dispose at your heart the image of this colleague, second martyr of the Revolution [after the Lepeletier, killed by the royalist soldier Parîs for voting for the death of Louis XVI].”⁸⁸ A pro-Marat member immediately declared his support, “this bust must not be hidden, like those of Brutus, Le Peletier and Dampierre have been for so long”, adding that the image should be put in the meeting room of the Convention itself. Another member resisted this partisan re-signification of the room by invoking a decree that said, “all such monuments will only be placed in the ante-rooms”. That day the Convention had already been asked to send delegates to an inauguration of similar busts in one of the sections and to the revealing of an obelisk dedicated to Marat.⁸⁹ Clearly the members realised the kind of signals that such a relegation would send to radical Parisians, especially given the unambiguous position the Commune had taken on the matter. A third *conventionnel* rose to say that an exception to the rule about the location of images ought to be made in the case of assassinated

⁸⁵ Thomas E. Crow, “Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France”, London, 1995, p. 163, n. 12.

⁸⁶ Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, vol. 9, Doc. 725.

⁸⁷ For example, the apprentice of the wig-maker Vivien who was reported to the police for saying, “it was the right thing to assassinate him [Marat].” Ibid., 9, Doc. 738.

⁸⁸ Archives Parlementaires, op cit, vol. 69, p. 523.

⁸⁹ Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, vol. 8, Doc. 1261.

colleagues and moved that images of Marat, Lepeletier and Brutus should be erected in the legislature. A vote was held and the Convention agreed. The legislature had been forced by popular pressure to use images to signify its close and accurate representation of the will of the people or, more truthfully, the will of a potentially dangerous portion of the people who had loved Marat's radical politics. The bust in the Convention was used in a process of consensus building and eventually, on 5 November 1793, the image was given pride of place in the meeting room when its column was raised above the others.⁹⁰

Yet, as was noted above, many Parisians felt a great deal of antipathy towards Marat. The inauguration of a bust of him by the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins illustrates the way in which such a partisan revolutionary sign could become a focus of conflict as well as of consensus building. Following their meeting of 5 August 1793, the section published its minutes in *affiche* form. On the left of the *affiche* was the report of the commissioners of the Section des Arcis, who had been sent to give an address at an inauguration ceremony that had taken place in St. Roch a few days before. The commissioners had heard, with "indignation", applause in the Butte-des-Moulins at the announcement of "the truly afflicting news of the massacre of a Representative of the People, of our friend, of this incorruptible defender of our rights, of the illustrious MARAT".⁹¹ On the right-hand side of the *affiche* came the host section's response, saying "It is only too true that there are to be found in the Section of the Butte-des-Moulins, Citizens perverse enough, treacherous enough to applaud the assassination of the incorruptible Friend of the People MARAT. The very largest part of the Assembly has been penetrated by indignation, and to do them justice, it decided that this atrocious fact should be consigned to the minutes, and that the minutes should be denounced to the public Accusator of the revolutionary Tribunal to discover and punish the authors. It is now in their hands. Citizens, the applause that covered your address announced clearly enough to you that the public spirit in the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins is not today what it was before. [...] Citizens, report to your Section the favourable news that you have received from the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins, tell them that we share the sadness that is inspired in the true friends of Liberty by the death of MARAT. Tell them that we have decided to walk in the footsteps of this truly celebrated man, and that now

⁹⁰ Guillaume op cit, Vol. 2, p. 749. The sculptor Deseine offered a bust of Marat to the Convention on 6 August 1793. Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 9, Doc. 809. On 5 Pluviôse an II, Bouillet presented a bust of Lepeletier in classical costume. Ibid., Doc. 1290. On 3 Ventôse an II, Florion, a canonier of the arsenal of Meulan, presented another bust of Lepeletier that was adopted as the best type seen by the Convention because its simple costume was best suited to the "republican character". Ibid., Doc. 1291.

⁹¹ Anon, "Extrait du procès-verbal de la Section de la Butte-des-Moulins, du 5 Août 1793", Paris, 1793.

the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins, purged of the disorganisers who troubled it, works according to good principles". In other words, anti-Maratist members of the Section de la Butte-des-Moulins had deliberately disrupted the inauguration of the busts with loud applause that drowned out his eulogies. Following their outburst, these moderates, so long attacked by other sections, were eventually purged from the assembly, allowing radicals to gain control and advertise their ascendancy to the rest of Paris with the *affiche* and, soon afterwards a name change to the Section de la Montagne. The bust had served as a focal point for the on-going dispute between different factions within the section and it seems that the ceremony actually had to be abandoned as another one was held in the section on 14 September 1793.⁹² The church of St. Roch had already been re-signified as a revolutionary space, following Daujon's suppression of feudal and royal images and finally, with the introduction of the provocative bust, it had been signified as a space with a specific partisan meaning.

The inaugurations of busts of Marat were less problematic in sections where the radicals had already gained control of the assemblies and committees. There were no reports of trouble in the Section du Contrat Social when, on 10 August, it exhibited a "simulcre of this representative on his death bed" in St. Eustache, re-signifying the space in the same partisan way as St. Roch.⁹³ The Convention continued to publicise its desire to represent the will of the people by involving itself with images of Marat. It sent 24 members to attend the St. Eustache ceremony.⁹⁴ On 14 September 1793, another re-signifying ceremony was held in Section du Luxembourg's Patriotic Society's meeting room in the seminary of St. Sulpice.⁹⁵ Busts were finally inaugurated in St. Sulpice during Frimaire An II.⁹⁶ Similar ceremonies continued to be held in sections and clubs until well into 1794. Interestingly, members of the CoM were sometimes invited to attend inaugurations, their presence signifying the fact that the busts, often made cheaply in plaster (fig. 45), had aesthetic and historical value as well as a political functions.⁹⁷ Opponents of such re-significations were probably inclined to remain quiet, given the assimilation of Marat into the official discourses of the sections, the Commune and the Convention. To challenge the inaugurations was to become suspect in the eyes of the

⁹² Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", vol. 8, Doc. 1262.

⁹³ Ibid., vol. 9, Doc. 808.

⁹⁴ Ibid., Doc. 814.

⁹⁵ N. A. F., 2704, No. 162.

⁹⁶ N. A. F., 2705, dossier 329.

⁹⁷ For example: Tuetey op cit, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 2, p. 79. According to a sale notice from 1990 stored in the Musée de la Révolution Française in Vizille, François Daujon was charged with producing busts of Marat for revolutionary clubs.

increasingly dominant radicals, as the purge in the Butte-des-Moulins showed. Post-Thermidor, however, when the Montagnards fell from power, moderates were to have their revenge on the Terror's symbols.

We will be discussing de-Christianisation in greater depth in section 5.5 but, if we are to understand the implications of the iconoclastic attacks on busts of Marat, we need to consider the images' role at this point in the de-Christianisation programme. As we will show below, de-signification of Constitutional churches as Catholic spaces began in October 1793. If one considers the ways in which Marat was talked about and the ways in which his images were treated at this time, it is tempting to argue that there was a transfer of sacredness from Catholic saints to a cult of revolutionary martyrs. Recently, Tony Halliday has written that, "the quasi-religious character of the Marat cult has [...] been over-emphasised".⁹⁸ Halliday argues for the importance of secular, classical and Republican traditions of using busts in funerals of heroes. He notes that revolutionary oratory, at festivals marking the death of Marat, often equated the presence of images of the deceased with the actual presence of the subject of the ceremony, saying that this was a "conflation suggestive of Roman attitudes".⁹⁹ It is entirely valid to draw attention to such possibilities, not least because the better-educated members of the sectional committees that organised so many festivals of this kind were probably familiar with classical funerary traditions through their reading. Mona Ozouf has also been keen to offer an alternative to a simple model suggesting a transference of sacredness that began before official de-Christianisation. She has written that, "One hesitates [...] to conclude in this particular case – despite the altars erected in the streets, despite the invocations and the incense – that Marat was being deified or even sanctified".¹⁰⁰ Ozouf warns that, "one should not be taken in by the vocabulary. Someone might well have said that Marat was immortal, but as much was said of Brutus or Lycurgus: in the discourse of the Revolution, immortality was not a hope but a symbol of survival in collective memory".¹⁰¹

A dictionary published in 1788 seems to support the possibility that religious vocabulary was increasingly being assimilated into purely secular discourse in France at this time. It said that the word *holy*, "has become very fashionable, to the point of being ridiculous.

⁹⁸ Tony Halliday, "David's *Marat* as Posthumous Portrait", in William Vaughan & Helen Weston (eds.), *David's Death of Marat*, London, forthcoming, p. 34.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁰⁰ Ozouf op cit, p. 266.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

At present it is applied to everything: *holy liberty*".¹⁰² The word *holy* was often applied to Marat and his images but, as the dictionary's author said, the word "sometimes signifies nothing other than sacred, respectable".¹⁰³ Thus, both the words "holy" and "sacred" clearly had well-established secular usages. Certainly, as we will see in section 5.5, the organisers of the de-Christianising movement did not wish people to think about any revolutionary images in a Catholic way. A document from An II, makes it clear that children were taught to make a distinction between the ways of thinking about images that they had previously been accustomed to, and the new modes of reception required for dealing with busts of revolutionary martyrs. A letter sent to the Section du Luxembourg's Patriotic Society, probably from a teenage boy, said, "Jealous to partake in the happiness of my mother who crowned these two victims of the fatherland [...] I come into the heart of your society to offer homage to these two defenders of liberty. I ask the society to accord me the pleasure of placing a crown on each of their heads. These are not saints that one must honour, these are great men. One does not make [representations of] them at great expense like in fabricating [representations of] the Holy Fathers. I abjure the sign of the cross of the old régime to make a dedication to Marat and Le Peletier". Then the correspondent asked if he might recount the beginning of the Rights of Man to the society, saying that this text "has replaced in my memory the [Catholic] absurdities that bored me as a child".¹⁰⁴

But as Ozouf asks, "Was this vocabulary of honour, were these invocations and praises capable – Albert Soboul questions – of being transposed by simple minds, knowing nothing of the literary mode of praise, unfamiliar with hyperbole, and all too ready to turn these great men into saints?"¹⁰⁵ She concludes that the language is not "evidence of the reality of a saint-like cult: no therapeutic powers were attributed to Marat. Apart from a few isolated incidents, people did not touch the bust or kiss it or ask it to perform some action. This cult, such as it was, lacked the essential element, namely, sacralising protection".¹⁰⁶ Certainly, when referring to Marat or his busts, religiously charged words could be understood as being entirely secular in meaning. De-Christianising orators might have had this meaning in mind when they used such vocabulary. But it is important to note that in reaching her conclusion Ozouf has confused the sacred and saintly, a distinction that is not adequately denoted by the French words *sacré* and *sainte*,

¹⁰² L'abbé Féraud op cit, vol. 3, p. 514.

¹⁰³ Ozouf op cit., p. 266.

¹⁰⁴ N. A. F., no. 321.

¹⁰⁵ Ozouf op cit., p. 266..

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

the latter being much closer in meaning to the English word *holy*. Just because people failed to kiss or touch busts of Marat does not preclude the possibility that they thought the images to be sacred in a quasi-religious way. Churches are *sacred*, but statues of saints are *saintly* and *sacred*. That is to say, the space of a church is sacred because it is consecrated to God, set apart from the profane, and, as a result, inviolable. The statue of the saint is sacred in the same way but it also represents a *saint*, someone who through the grace of God has been perfected, now sits at his side in heaven and is somehow contactable through meditation before the statue. For a Catholic, touching something sacred, like the building of a church or a sacred vase, would not suffice to offer, what Ozouf calls, “sacralising protection”. Only an object that was also *saintly* could have such a function. If one prayed before the statue of a saint the prototype might appeal to God to intercede and help. All we can deduce from peoples’ failure to touch the busts of Marat in this way is that they did not regard them as *saintly*, but that is not to say they did not think of them as being sacred in a transcendently religious sense; dedicated to the supreme being and inviolable because they represented a virtuous man whose qualities were not saintly but saint-like.

For a good Catholic there could be little doubt that Marat was not a saint, he had not gone through the long-winded process of beatification, nor, to my knowledge, had miracles ever been attributed to him. If, in one of the rare cases of someone touching his image in order to elicit intercessionary assistance, a cure had occurred, then a popular demand for declaring him a saint might have arisen. Of course, such a development became extremely unlikely once official oppression of Catholicism began because it would have rendered one “suspect”. In any case, come de-Christianisation, loyal Catholics probably felt less sympathetic towards the images of Marat that were so closely associated with their oppressors and were replacing Catholic imagery in churches. To these Catholics the treatment of the busts of the revolutionary martyrs might have seemed like deliberate sacrilege, the illegitimate and quasi-religious assimilation of modes of image-treatment that were appropriate only for Catholic saints. To them Marat’s images were “idols” worshipped like false Gods. The replacement of the miraculous statue of the Virgin on the rue aux Ours with a bust of Marat, on 25 October 1793, must have seemed most offensive to many Catholics.¹⁰⁷ But that is not to say that Parisians who were culturally Catholic, but willing to abjure the doctrine of the Church, did not continue to make sense of the world by developing their own syncretical belief systems that relied on their knowledge of Catholic modes of thought combined with Republican ones.

¹⁰⁷ A. P. P., AA. 163, no. 139.

To people who were not classically educated, orators' conflation of the presence of the image and its prototype must have had resonances with the Church's teachings on the presence of saints in, or through, their images, rather than with classical funeral traditions. The carrying of palms during inauguration ceremonies must also have recalled Catholic martyrs to those used to seeing such motifs held by martyr saints in religious images.¹⁰⁸ Equally, the crowning of statues must have had connotations of the same practice of crowning the particularly efficacious intercessionary statues of the Virgin Mary, visible in Parisian churches and in confraternity prints for centuries.¹⁰⁹ A popular print of a bust of Marat that showed his head surrounded by a halo of stars (fig. 46), also drew on an immediately recognisable Catholic convention seen, for example in some widely distributed confraternity prints celebrating miraculous statues (fig. 17).¹¹⁰ To talk about, treat and represent revolutionary imagery in ways that were familiar to Catholics might have served the purposes of de-Christianising orators and festival organisers, helping their audiences understand the importance of the men being celebrated. Equally, it might have been hoped that if the same viewers meditated upon Catholic imagery again, the very mental processes involved might serve to recall the preferable republican exemplars of Marat, Lepeletier *et al.* For many Parisians, Catholicism offered a set of "intellectual resources" for understanding the world and the images within it. Indeed, when Catholic images were suppressed, de-Christianisers were not only attacking the objects but also the way of seeing and thinking that they perpetuated and which were regarded as inappropriate for good republicans. Assimilating such modes of thought into revolutionary discourse undermined their Catholic specificity and, ironically, could help in the process of de-signifying and re-signifying the Catholic churches in which so many of the inaugurations and ceremonies took place. I am not arguing that quasi-religious

¹⁰⁸ During its inauguration of busts of Marat and Lepelletier, the Section de la Cité placed palms at the foot of the martyrs' busts. Anon, "Section de la Cité. Procès-verbaux de la fête civique, célébrée le jour de l'inauguration des bustes de Lepelletier et Marat. Représentans du Peuple, morts victimes de leur dévouement à la Patrie", Paris, An II.

¹⁰⁹ The Section de la Cité crowned the busts during its inauguration ceremony. Ibid.

¹¹⁰ This convention had also been used in secular prints, for example, in an image from 1791 that incorporated an iconoclastic motif too (fig. 47). In the foreground, an allegorical figure of fame heralded a bust of Voltaire with a trumpet while knocking over a bust of Louis XVI with her foot and derisively blowing a trumpet from her backside to signify the king's infamy. In the background, the image depicted the remains of Voltaire being transferred to the Panthéon. The head of Voltaire's bust is surrounded by stars and the inscription on the busts' plinth, "Immortal man", implies that the stars signify immortality. Text above the Panthéon makes the connection between this immortality and the recognition of great men by *la patrie*. Thus, the print showed a space (Ste Geneviève) and a mark of distinction (the halo of stars) both of which had been appropriated from Catholicism to serve secular revolutionary functions. Nevertheless, given the massive quantity of Catholic imagery in the public domain, it is probable that some Parisians were more familiar with the religious use of the motif of stars than the secular equivalent.

ways of interpreting the meaning and significance of Marat and his images were necessarily the most prevalent in Paris at this time, just that they should not be dismissed as being real possibilities.

Even though the word sacred, like Marat and his images, was polysemic, whether or not people regarded Marat's sacredness as having a quasi-religious dimension they all understood a key connotation of labeling him and his images in this way. Namely, that which is sacred is inviolable and set apart as special, different from the objects of everyday life, demanding respect. The principal grounds for Marat's sacredness were his exemplary republican virtues, associated with *enragé* or Montagnard politics depending on one's personal persuasion. It was for this reason that the busts of Marat became targets for the reactionary iconoclasm of the *jeunesse dorée* post-Thermidor. Busts were destroyed in theatres,¹¹¹ the bust on the rue aux Ours was pulled down¹¹² and Marat's remains were removed from the Panthéon and cast into the gutter.¹¹³ The iconoclasts were not counter-revolutionaries, one of their most notable figures, Fréron, repeatedly wrote diatribes against royalism, but they were anti-Montagnard, anti-*enragé* and opposed to the policies of de-Christianisation and Terror.¹¹⁴ Destroying "sacred" images associated with Terrorist rule signified the absolute rejection of the régime's most hallowed objects and heroes, violating the inviolable. The *jeunesse dorée*'s hatred of Terror was also clearly signified by an iconoclastic attack on the statue of Liberty that stood on the pedestal once occupied by the sculpture of Louis XV. Raoul Arnaud has written that the figure of Liberty was painted pink after Thermidor.¹¹⁵ I am inclined to think that the sculpture was actually painted red, to denote the bloody nature of "liberty" during the Terror, when the statue over-looked one of the major sites for executions. Being made of white plaster, the red paint was effectively diluted into a rather less forceful colour scheme, pink.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, the statue of Liberty, like the debris of busts of Marat and his physical remains, were transformed into indexical signs that signified the public rejection of the

¹¹¹ François Gendron, "La Jeunesse Dorée, Épisodes de la Révolution Française", Quedec, 1979, p. 110.

¹¹² A. P. P., AA. 163, no. 355.

¹¹³ Raoul Arnaud, "Journaliste, sans-culotte et Thermidorien. Le fils de Fréron 1754 – 1802", Paris, 1909, p. 316. I intend to write an article about these outbursts of iconoclasm.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹¹⁶ The police commissioner charged with supervising the Place de la Révolution had been repeatedly warning the minister of the interior, since August 1793, that he feared the statue of Liberty might be attacked if a guard was not posted beside it immediately. A. N. F/13/312c, Dossiers 4–6. This archival material also offers a fascinating insight into the life of the square at this time, the festival atmosphere during executions, the presence of a wax-work show and an exhibition of exotic animals, a doctor and a dance show. It also details the problem of attacks being made on the sculpture in the jardins des Tuileries and the limited protection offered by old soldiers recruited for the job from les Invalides.

Terror's political paradigms; iconoclasm gave physical form to ideological struggles. The Post-Thermidorian iconoclastic attacks served to re-signify spaces in the same way that earlier official suppressions had and, similarly, these attacks were opposed by those with different political views, in particular Parisians who were calling for "bread and the Constitution of 1793." This wave of iconoclasm serves to show that even revolutionary signs could become the targets of iconoclasts if the objects were thought to be out of step with dominant political discourses and/or with the appropriate uses of spaces' whose meanings the images signified.

All of the previous studies of revolutionary iconoclasm have failed to mention the use of revolutionary signs or the iconoclastic attacks on them. But such uses and attacks are very important because they show that revolutionary iconoclasm was rather more varied in its targets and motivations than has previously been implied. It is my belief that the diversity of revolutionary iconoclasm, sometimes even turning on the symbols of belief systems that the iconoclasts broadly supported, or against those of opposing revolutionary factions, indicates the vital role that representational objects played in mediating extremely complex power struggles. Imagery could fulfil this function as it did because, for so many Parisians, its value was not principally assessed in aesthetic or historical terms but, rather, in terms of its political and/or *cultuelle* value. These values could be diminished by the context in which images were used and/or dismissed by people who held different political and/or religious views to those they believed to be represented by the images. Far from showing the ignorance of iconoclasts, such iconoclasm underlines the complex and sometimes conflicting contemporary understandings of the way in which images functioned, ought to function and were valued. The condemnatory historians' omission of any discussion of attacks on revolutionary images can be attributed to the fact that these writers have never valued this imagery in the same ways as many revolutionaries did. The historians draw an anachronistic distinction between "high art", with aesthetic and historical value, and "low art" with no such value. Historically, the distinction is misleading and leads to the omission of some interesting outbreaks of iconoclasm that serve to show that iconoclasts were by no means necessarily Jacobins.

5.5 De-Christianisation and iconoclasm

John McManners has written that the de-Christianisation of An II “was not an invention of central government”. The Convention, he argued, “connived at de-Christianisation, rather than encouraged it”.¹¹⁷ I support McManners position, it is clear that many *conventionnels* opposed de-Christianisation. But, given the willingness of Parisian radicals to intervene in the workings of the national and municipal authorities if they were thought to be betraying the will of the people, one has to assume that de-Christianisation had its supporters in the sections. Why, therefore, had support for the Constitutional Catholic Church dropped so much by the end of 1793? The answers to this question are manifold. Along with other historians, Roger Chartier has argued that de-Christianisation was possible because of the increasing dissemination and acceptance of enlightenment criticisms of Catholicism during the second half of the eighteenth-century.¹¹⁸ Chartier has also argued that migration “destroyed the discipline and strained the ties of dependence formerly guaranteed by parish constraint and the authority of the clergy”, an idea which is interesting, if difficult to support empirically.¹¹⁹ But it was the political circumstance of 1793 that allowed the gradual secularisation of Parisian society to be transformed into widespread de-Christianisation, resulting in official, semi-official and unofficial iconoclasm. Catholic material signs came to mediate a broader struggle for dominance between conflicting ideas and policies.

The fall of the monarchy had irrevocably destroyed the revolutionary consensus of “God, king and law”. Officially it was replaced by “God, people and law”, as represented in a print produced by Basset that includes the iconoclastic motif of an allegorical figure of Liberty trampling on smashed coats-of-arms (fig. 48). Yet, this representation of an unproblematic revolutionary consensus was a little optimistic. In fact, Catholicism, whether or not it was of the constitutional variety, was coming to be viewed with increasing suspicion by some politically active Parisians. The traditional connection between Catholicism and royalism did not help to calm the fears of such people. Nor were suspicions diminished by news of some Catholics’ loyalty to the dead king, such as the *Soeurs de Charité* who were denounced to their local section in October because they

¹¹⁷ McManners op cit, p. 86.

¹¹⁸ Chartier op cit, p. 96 & p. 100.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 105. The number of migrants moving to Paris from the provinces was rising in 1790, 1791, and 1792 and soared in 1793. For example, 73% of the population of the Section du Luxembourg had not been born in Paris. See the unnumbered tables and graphs from the opening, unpaginated section of: Michel Vovelle (ed.), “Paris et la Révolution”, Paris, 1989. One has to wonder, did migrants abandon their religious traditions when they arrived in Paris or did they find comfort in them?

had “a piece of the cloak of Capet that they guard like a relic”.¹²⁰ The visible proximity of feudal, royal and Catholic symbols throughout Paris, especially in the churches that were acting as meeting places, must have further reinforced the connection of the two discredited political paradigms and an increasingly suspect religious one.

Politically motivated suspicion of Catholicism was fueled by events in France and abroad. On 13 January 1793, a Roman Catholic crowd in Rome killed a French diplomat, Bassville, for hoisting the tricolor above his house and making his servants wear the revolutionary cockade. This was a confrontation that had been centered around the treatment of symbols.¹²¹ Aulard claims that because the Constitutional Church still regarded the Pope as the “visible head of the Universal Church”, it too was discredited by Bassville’s assault. Suspicion of constitutional Catholicism was also fostered among Montagnards and *enragés* by the fact that the Girondins *conventionnels*, until their ejection from the legislature, had repeatedly expressed support for constitutional priests.¹²² The war in the Vendée, where Parisian troops fought to suppress self-declared “Catholic and royalist” armies, cannot have eased Parisian radicals’ distrust of the Church. Those radicals who were not already secularised Catholics, deists or atheists, might have been prompted to question their faith when they heard the news from the fronts, sent to their families and friends but also to revolutionary clubs in Paris.¹²³ The secret masses still being held by non-jurors had a similar indirect influence on the revolutionary credibility of the constitutional Church.¹²⁴ The Catholics’ loyalty to revolutionary law might also have been questioned by anyone who chanced across devotional images produced in 1793. For example, in violation of the law of the previous August, in 1793 the confraternity of St. Fiacre based at St. Sulpice published an

¹²⁰ When their buildings were searched, almanacs from 1792 containing images of king and his wife were found, along with prayer books and reliquaries that were dedicated to the Dauphin and decorated with his image and that of the Sacred Heart. However, the women were not arrested because they were “loved” by the section’s poor. That is to say the *sectionnaires* needed the nuns to continue their charity work. Herissay op cit., p. 130.

¹²¹ Alphonse Aulard op cit, p. 96.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 99–100.

¹²³ Several such letters, sent to the Section du Luxembourg’s Patriotic Society, survive in the archives detailing the battle against “fanaticism” in the Pyrénées Occidentales (N. A. F., 2795, no. 388, 397) and victories against the “fanatical herd” of “rebels” (N. A. F. 2795, no. 298). Also, 50 copies of an address given during a festival in the ex-church of St. Sulpice were sold for the benefit of the wives of the “brave brothers who are fighting on the frontiers and elsewhere”. N. A. F., 2795, no. 392.

¹²⁴ For example, the police Office of Surveillance heard a report, on 28 May 1793, that the Couvent des Anglaises was so full of non-juring women hearing mass that they spilled out into the street. The report warned, “fanaticism is awaking in Paris”, reflecting the general paranoia felt by people who feared a fifth column of pro-Vendéen Catholics living in the capital. Tuetey op cit, “Répertoire”, Vol. 9, Doc. 489.

engraving of their patron saint (fig. 49).¹²⁵ The members were gardeners who were brave or reckless enough to include their officers' names on the plate. Such imagery was an act of defiance by Catholics who refused to surrender the images used in their traditional devotional practices and sociability. Thus, it can be argued, Catholic imagery was also becoming increasingly suspect.

Towards the end of the year, the revolutionary loyalties of constitutional Catholics were increasingly called into doubt. For example, on 20 August 1793, an Irish priest from St. Roch was arrested for being counter-revolutionary.¹²⁶ This kind of incident had a knock-on effect, tainting parishioners who had known or worshipped with such individuals. Once Terror had been declared to be the order of the day, denunciations and arrests became more frequent, especially in the sections where radicals had asserted control. On 7 September, the *curé* of St. Roch was arrested for "incivicism" and, on the same day, another priest from the church was denounced for having supported the Champs de Mars massacre in 1791.¹²⁷ On 15 September, another police report complained that constitutional priests were trying to "fanaticise" the people and "put them back under the yoke of superstition". Citing an "ultramontaine" discourse given by a constitutional priest in St. Roch, the author, with a degree of prescience, said that *sans-culottes* orators ought to be elected to replace priests and declare "sacred republican principles" from the pulpit.¹²⁸ Without an established *curé*, the Catholics in this parish, at least, lacked a rallying-point to help them resist increasingly persistent criticism.

However, anti-Catholic sentiment did not spread uniformly throughout Parisian society in 1793. On the contrary, there is a lot of evidence that suggests that many Catholics kept their faith and still considered themselves to be good revolutionaries. In fact, the *fête dieu*, the day when Catholic imagery was ostentatiously displayed in the streets, became something of a focal point for a debate about the theoretical consensus of "God, people and law". On the one hand, the observer Dutard warned Garat, on 25 May, that "the people unanimously want a thing to which they are attached, and which, for their part, their representatives take to task and contradict their tastes and their penchants". He added that, "if the Convention does not return this solemnity" the people would renew opposition against the legislature.¹²⁹ Yet, on the other hand, the Section du

¹²⁵ There was a painting of St. Fiacre in the second chapel on the right of the base of St. Sulpice. The chapel was probably used by the confraternity. A. N., F/17/1036a, dossier 6, no. 79.

¹²⁶ Herissay op cit, p. 103.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid., Doc. 1316.

¹²⁹ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 9, Doc. 635.

Luxembourg's Patriotic Society wrote to the Convention to say that with the approach of the *fête dieu* "we see that fanaticism is becoming agitated in all senses". They asked for prompt measures to prevent disorder and added that the law ordained that all cults should remain in their temples.¹³⁰ Unsurprisingly, on the actual day of the festival there were confrontations between its supporters and opponents. Dutard reported that at St. Eustache tapestries had been put up and people waited from early in the morning to see if the procession would go ahead. "The *curé*", wrote Dutard, "went to the revolutionary committee to ask their opinion. They formally and expressively responded that it should not leave. At around 5 or 6 in the morning the women of les Halles came along there in a crowd, and they demanded an explanation from the *curé*. The *curé* returned to the revolutionary committee and, having treated him as he deserved, it delivered permission and the procession went on without drums or music."¹³¹ Dutard added that, in the Faubourg St. Marceau, "the Gobelins [tapestry factory] displayed masterpieces of art as usual, except for the attributes of royalty. One could see that the traits of holy history could not but please most people".¹³² Thus, the observer used the responses of *le peuple* to the presence of religious imagery to emphasise the need to "displace nothing" of the old practices, as he put it. Once again, the fate of images was being used to represent the issues at stake. Officials in other sections also faced conflict with *le peuple* over the *fête dieu*. In the Section de la Croix-Rouge, an adjutant was sacked for causing a scandal by refusing to remove his hat when the procession from St. Sulpice passed his guardhouse.¹³³ One can see that different sectional authorities took clearly distinct positions in relation to Catholicism. What is more, the Convention, like the sections, was under pressure from different groups of Parisians who either regarded Catholicism as suspect or as unjustly threatened.

Dutard was an official observer for the revolutionary government, but he saw no conflict of interest between the revolutionary beliefs and religious faith of, for example, the market women of les Halles who knelt as a constitutional priest went past in procession to visit a dying parishioner.¹³⁴ However, the most remarkable Catholic-revolutionary syncretism I have come across relates to the treatment of Catholic imagery by revolutionaries just outside Paris. In July 1793, an observer wrote, "In a village at the gates of Paris, Nanterre, fanaticism and superstition are still so great that, in order to

¹³⁰ N. A. F., 2795, no. 62.

¹³¹ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 9, Doc. 670.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., Doc. 699.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

promptly obtain the end of the war, they have covered the Virgin with gifts; she is covered with tricolor ribbons".¹³⁵ The observer clearly did not share Dutard's tolerance of Catholicism and its uses of images. Indeed, this hostility towards the traditional religious function of Catholic representational objects, especially intercessionary statues that were believed to be connected to their prototype, was a major motivating factor in the iconoclasm we are soon to discuss. Nevertheless, Nanterre's Catholics used a reputedly miraculous statue to plead for martial intervention and, in the process, signified the sculpture as being a pro-revolutionary image. The use of the sculpture re-emphasises the points made in chapter 3 about Catholic art being valued principally in terms of its religious value because of its involvement in the struggles of the wider world. Clearly, people decorating the statue of the Virgin with tricolor ribbons did not worry that they were spoiling the aesthetic value of the composition. The ribbons were not strictly speaking, *ex-votos*. After all, the war had not been won and, therefore, there was nothing to thank the Virgin for, at least not as yet. But the leaving of the gifts was obviously related to the *ex-voto* tradition; a kind of pre-emptive gift, almost an act of celestial blackmail. Nor was this an isolated incident. On 26 August 1793, just weeks before de-Christianisation began in Paris, the council of Meudon led a procession to the Nanterre statue to appeal for rain. They said that the Supreme Being was irritated with them, hence the drought that was jeopardising their crops.¹³⁶ What is interesting about this example is that the procession was officially organised, implying that the statue was being used by the authorities in a way that was similar to the use of the relics of Ste. Geneviève as a means of social control during the *ancien régime*, discussed in chapter two. Yet, as we will argue below, the importance of such images to Catholics and the traditionally functional view of their value, helped to make iconoclastic attacks against them desirable and imaginable for de-Christianisers.

Measures against Catholic imagery began to be taken when, at the start of September 1793, the Commune decreed that the depots where monuments were stored must make all metal available for the war effort, including "ornaments of the cult garnished with silver and gold".¹³⁷ Influenced by reports being received from members *en mission* in the provinces, warning that Catholicism was a locus and focus of loyalties that competed against undivided sympathy for the revolution, the Commune, on 14 October 1793, ruled

¹³⁵ Adolphe Schmidt op cit, vol. IV, p. 20.

¹³⁶ Herissay op cit, p. 97. Despite its later connection with the Cult of the Supreme Being, this synonym for the word *God* was common in Catholic texts long before the revolution.

¹³⁷ "Inventaire des richesses" op cit, Lenoir's records for 13 September.

definitively against the external exercise of the cults.¹³⁸ All the opportunities to parade Catholic art around the city, signifying Paris as Catholic, had been outlawed. Two days later the radical Chaumette read a letter from his friend and colleague Fauché, who was *en mission* in the provinces.¹³⁹ Fauché said that because the liberty of the cults meant that no religion should be privileged over any other, all the external signs of Catholicism ought to be destroyed.¹⁴⁰ He argued that to fail to take such a measure could lead to “confusion and disorder”. That is to say, confusion over the religious impartiality of the republic and disorder as a result of some people trying to enforce it while others resisted it. It was not until 23 October that radicals in the Commune managed to pass this measure, decreeing that “all religious effigies that exist in the various places in Paris are to be removed”.¹⁴¹ In effect, the legalised destruction of all the Catholic images and symbols outside church buildings had been decreed. The already over-worked CoM was now in a position in which its triages had to be carried out on a new and overwhelming scale. The situation was further aggravated when, on 7 November, the Commune extended its ruling to include signs of religion inside buildings. Shortly afterwards, the CoM was suppressed for lack of “civicism” and most of its members assimilated into a larger body, the TCA.¹⁴²

In the Convention there was considerable opposition to de-Christianisation but no straightforward consensus that could slow the moves driven by the Commune. Utilitarianism gave the Convention justification to agree to an iconoclastic measure against Church symbols and, on 4 November 1793, it decreed that all gold and silver in public buildings, including churches, was to be melted down for the war effort.¹⁴³ This measure could be seen as being a reaction to the arrival of a delegation from the district of Ris-Orangis that had come to the Convention the day before. The visitors had brought with them “all the instruments of superstition” from their parish church, proposing to take them all to the crucible.¹⁴⁴ The legislature was coming under

¹³⁸ Guillaume op cit, vol. 2, pp. 627–629.

¹³⁹ McManners has offered rather harsh criticism of Chaumette, accusing him of being an “exhibitionist who sought to bring himself to notice”. McManners op cit, p. 87. However, if this was the case, then why did Chaumette order the police of the Section de la Montagne to confiscate portraits of him that were being sold outside the Palais d’Egalité? A. P. P., AA. 93, nos. 437 & 439.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ *Le Moniteur*, of 25 October 1793.

¹⁴² “Inventaire des richesses” op cit., p. 101. In fact, the transition between the two organisations took several weeks. Several documents pertaining to the suppression of the CoM, including correspondence with the CPI and the minister of the interior in the National Archive are in: A. N., F/17/1051 & F/17/1053, dossier 1 & 2. The Commission also published a justification of its work: Commission of Monuments op cit, “Compte rendu a la Convention Nationale”.

¹⁴³ Guillaume op cit, vol. 2, p. 749.

¹⁴⁴ Alphonse Aulard, “Le Culte de la Raison et le Culte de l’Être Suprême (1793–1794), Paris, 1892, p. 36.

**PAGE
MISSING
IN
ORIGINAL**

Virgin, impudently called the mother of the saviour".¹⁵⁰ The church was to be re-signified through the substitution of revolutionary signs for Catholic ones. During the festival, on 10 November, all the Catholic images and symbols that remained in the church were covered up,¹⁵¹ but no sculpture of Liberty was used as a focal point. An article, probably written by the organiser, Momoro, explained in *Révolutions de Paris*, that a statue was not used because "one wanted from the first moment to break peoples' habits of all species of idolatry. One guards against putting in the place of the Holy Sacrament an inanimate sculpture of Liberty because gross spirits could mistake it as a god of stone in the place of a god of bread". Instead, an actress represented Liberty because she "could not be deified by the ignorant as a statue of stone could be."¹⁵² In a dictionary published in 1788, idolatry had been defined as being "the adoration of idols [...and] all sovereign cults where honour is offered to false divinities".¹⁵³ By referring to "all species of iconoclasm", Momoro made it clear that he meant both the worship of images and the worship of false gods. His comments would have been deeply offensive to Catholics who, no doubt, would have agreed with Voltaire that because of the uneducated nature of some Catholics "care is accordingly taken [by the clergy] to give [Catholics] to understand that it is the blessed in heaven they are to invoke for their intercession and not figures of wood and stone, their worship is due to God".¹⁵⁴ But, for the de-Christianising Commune, it was not enough to de-signify churches as Catholic spaces by removing, altering or destroying all Catholic art; one also had to attempt to destroy the "idolatrous" Catholic way of relating to religious objects. Attacks on Catholic images and their uses were a relatively common metaphorical way for de-Christianising orators at other festivals in ex-churches to articulate the broader ideological struggle against Catholicism.¹⁵⁵ This fact supports my argument against Christin that many Parisians still thought about religious art very much in terms of its *cultuelle* value. Indeed, the de-Christianisers' fear

¹⁵⁰ Guillaume op cit, vol. 2, pp. 803–804.

¹⁵¹ Aulard op cit, "Le culte", pp. 106–107.

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 355–356. Using an actress to play Liberty was a further profanation of a Catholic space because, traditionally, Catholicism had refused to give mass to members of this profession.

¹⁵³ Fantin op cit, vol. 3, p. 446.

¹⁵⁴ François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, "The Philosophical Dictionary", London, 1785, vol. 2, p. 35. Ironically, Voltaire's bust stood at the entrance to the Festival of Liberty, but this particular aspect of his work seems to have been overlooked by Momoro.

¹⁵⁵ In St. Sulpice Michel Perrot attacked "fanatical and superstitious ceremonies" that "fix their attention on vain idols". Michel Perrot, "Discours de Michel Perrot. Imprimé sous les auspices de la Section de Mutius Scaevola, par Arrêté de l'Assemblée générale, du 15 messidor, an deuxième", Paris, An II, p. 2. In St. Roch, Monvel said "Instruments of error, treasures of fanaticism, idols of lies, all have disappeared, today all are cinders and dust." Monvel, "Discours fait et prononcé par le citoyen Monvel dans la Section de la Montagne, le jour de la Fête de la Raison célébrée dans la ci-devant église de Saint-Roch, le 10 Frimaire, an II de la République, une et indivisible", Paris, 1793–94.

of idolatry was so strong as to lead them, on 10 November 1793, to rule that “No material signs will be raised in any temple” – a decision that was widely ignored.¹⁵⁶

Immediately after the first Festival of Liberty, a delegation from the Commune reported on the event to the Convention. A group of *conventionnels* then processed to the Notre-Dame to hear a repeat performance of the ceremony.¹⁵⁷ However, only half of the legislators agreed to join the procession. The other half were clearly alienated by this divisive public assault on Catholicism, disagreeing with the offensive implications of Chaumette’s statement to them that “we have not offered our sacrifices to vain images, to inanimate idols”.¹⁵⁸ In the coming days, a similar proportion of the legislature’s members refused to attend its meetings because they did not wish to be associated with the increasing number of irreligious processions coming to the bar of the assembly.¹⁵⁹ Moderate *conventionnels* appreciated that the sections and communes that came to abjure religion constituted a proportion of the population whose wishes must be represented, but acknowledgment of such views risked alienating France’s Catholics. As Aulard put it, “In reality, the Convention was more astonished than seduced and, believing that [de-Christianisation] was an irresistible movement, it followed”.¹⁶⁰ On 11 November, with the skeptical members absent, the Convention declared that Notre-Dame would henceforth be known as the Temple of Reason.¹⁶¹ But key figures in the Convention were eager to restrain the rising tide of popular de-Christianisation. On 1 Frimaire, Robespierre declared that atheism was aristocratic, seeking to discredit the *enragé* atheists who were driving the Commune’s agenda.¹⁶² On 6 Frimaire, Robespierre agreed with Danton when he declared, “I desire there to be no more anti-religious masquerades before the Convention, I demand the erection of a barrier”.¹⁶³ In fact, the processions continued and they offer us a fascinating insight into the popular use of iconoclasm in this period, providing an important context within which to understand official and unofficial iconoclasm and the tensions occasioned by such actions against representational objects.

On 24 November, the Commune decreed that “all churches and chapels that exist in Paris will be closed forthwith” and anyone opposing the closures would be treated as a

¹⁵⁶ Aulard op cit, “Le Culte”, pp. 66–67.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 52.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁶¹ Guillaume op cit, vol. 2, pp. 355–356.

¹⁶² Aulard op cit, “Christianity”, p. 113.

¹⁶³ Ibid., pp. 114–115.

suspect.¹⁶⁴ Four days before the closure of the churches, the sections that fell within the parish of St. Roch went in procession to the National Convention with all of the remaining metal goods from the church. One must assume that they could bring so much metal, weighing 377 *livres*, because the moderates who had controlled the *ci-devant* Section du Butte-des-Moulins had not surrendered metal goods in 1792 on the same scale as the sections meeting in St. Sulpice and St. Eustache. The *sectionnaires* from St. Roch now declared that they had abjured Catholicism on 15 November and closed their parish church. They added that the ornaments were “all useless, even impertinent in a state of pure nature, and very useful at this moment to combat despots and tyrants”, comments that offer a marked contrast to the surrendering of Church metal in 1792, when sections had sometimes asked for replacement objects.¹⁶⁵ The procession’s center piece was a statue of St. Roch and his dog of which the *sectionnaires* said, “We have only one regret, and that is that the dog and the saint that we present to you are not constructed of a material as useful to the Republic as the *hochets* that surround them [i.e. metal]. In recompense, we hope that by their disappearance they will help to consolidate the edifice of justice and of reason.”¹⁶⁶ Material value was no longer the sole justification for destroying Catholic imagery; the butt of the attack was now religious value. In contrast with Danton’s anger at such processions, the Convention’s president praised this iconoclastic visit, saying that “You are no longer dupes of your patron; but, loyal like his companion, you remain inviolably attached to the Republic”.

Historians have sometimes referred to such processions as being carnivalesque because, as newspapers reported with reference to the St. Roch delegation, participants arrived dressed in clerical clothes, mocking the objects they wore and carried.¹⁶⁷ While the iconoclastic diminishment of clerical signifiers using derision and travesty do recall the carnival traditions of undermining Catholic signifiers with humour, in some key respects the St. Roch procession, for example, was very different from carnival. Firstly, carnival processions used mock-ups of real clerical clothes and other symbols. The St. Roch procession, on the other hand, used the real thing. Secondly, as Bakhtin argued, carnival processions made no distinction between audience and performers – everyone was both performer and audience member and, as a result, everyone laughed at themselves as well

¹⁶⁴ Aulard op cit, “Le Culte”, pp. 66–67.

¹⁶⁵ Tuetey, op cit, “Répertoire”, Vol. 10, Doc. 346.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. The St. Roch procession was reported in *le Moniteur Universel*, *l’Auditeur National*, and the *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*. The first two remarked on the costumes donned by the visitors.

**PAGE
MISSING
IN
ORIGINAL**

However, the CoM and the TCA were clearly worried by the sections' surrendering and insulting of Catholic art and the new uses of churches for de-Christianising festivals. The committees had a duty to preserve imagery that was valuable on aesthetic and/or historical grounds, even if the objects were politically or religiously unpopular locally. Three days before the Festival of Reason was held in St. Sulpice, on 20 November 1793,¹⁷² the Section du Bonnet Rouge's popular society had declared Catholic art to be "false simulcra", "ridiculous statues" and "foolish images", saying that they should be employed in the war "they have provoked".¹⁷³ Perhaps the preservationist commissions were aware of the rhetoric emanating from the sections in the parish of St. Sulpice because, on the same day, Boizot, a member of the CoM, was ordered to make a provisional inventory of the church.¹⁷⁴ The inventory-making, like all others in this period, required the presence of sectional officers and the secular guardians of the church. In his preamble, Boizot noted that he had also been accompanied by "many others", to whom he had emphasised the importance of not attempting to remove the bronze meridian that ran through the church.¹⁷⁵ He actually attached a sign to the meridian, "respect to national property", undermining the objects' specific association with Catholicism. By making an inventory, Boizot was able to publicise the commission's preservationist agenda and he was pleased to report that "I found all of the citizens very well disposed towards conforming to the desire of the conservations that were expressed there".¹⁷⁶ Following the procession of metal goods from St. Sulpice to the Convention, on 12 November, there were no iron objects left in the church. However, several bronze objects remained in place, perhaps because they were difficult to remove. Boizot reserved two bronze angels from the pulpit and three bas-reliefs from tombs and tabernacles for preservation. He also put several other sculptures on reserve, two of which he himself had made and another which had been made by his fellow commissioner, Mouchy.¹⁷⁷ Having listed the paintings and

¹⁷² Guillaume op cit, vol 2, pp. 355–356.

¹⁷³ Tuetey op cit, "Répertoire", Vol. 10, Doc. 324.

¹⁷⁴ A. N., F/17/1036a, dossier 6, no 80.

¹⁷⁵ Tuetey op cit, "Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 2, pp. 82–83. One of the reasons for Boizot's visit, expressed explicitly in a meeting of the CoM, was to ensure that the municipality's workmen, who were removing bronze and lead from the church, did not damage the meridian. Ibid., p. 81. The commission was also concerned that other municipal staff might jeopardise the preservationist project. For example, in its meeting of 15 December 1793, the CoM declared that it was not being informed of sales organised by the Commissioners of Sales – as a result of this negligence art was being sold that should not have been. Similar complaints had already been made a fortnight before. Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁷⁶ A. N., F/17/1036a, dossier 6, no 80.

¹⁷⁷ Boizot had sculpted a St. John in one of the chapels. He and Mouchy had produced sculpture for one of the chapels each, under the towers on either side of the main entrance. Ibid.

sculpture to be moved to the depot and the museum of the Louvre, Boizot noted that “The citizens of the section who were present have promised that all these objects entrusted to the guardians will not be destroyed before the inventories required by the law have been made and submitted to the Constituted Authority.” The commission had done what it could to preserve St. Sulpice’s art before the space was totally re-signified by its new use as a revolutionary temple.¹⁷⁸ On the eve of the festival, the commission ordered Guibert to begin removing art from the church.¹⁷⁹ But unofficial iconoclasm did occur in the section, despite the *sectionnaires*’ protestations to Boizot.

Given that Boizot was active in the Section de Mutius Scaevola’s popular society,¹⁸⁰ the CoM must have known that revolutionary imagery was going to be prominently displayed in St. Sulpice during the forthcoming festivals, making Catholic imagery appear more and more incongruous in this suppressed church.¹⁸¹ In fact, an iconoclastic signifier was prominently displayed during the first festival, Palloy provided a stone from the Bastille to “give this ceremony greater pomp and make it more majestic”.¹⁸² It is very likely that drapery was used to cover the entrances to St. Sulpice’s side chapels, where Catholic art would otherwise have been visible during the revolutionary festivals. But the preservationist commissions were concerned for the safety of two precious fonts at the entrance to the nave in St. Sulpice.¹⁸³ In their meeting of 30 November 1793, the TCA ruled that for the next festival in St. Sulpice, guards must be posted beside the objects to defend them from the crowds.¹⁸⁴ These concerns appear to have been well founded. On 5 December 1793, when another festival had just finished, an actress dressed as Liberty was carried in procession around the streets of St. Sulpice’s parish, to the Convention and, finally, to the square of the Section du Bonnet-Rouge, where two wooden sculptures carried from St. Sulpice were burnt.¹⁸⁵ The bonfire signified the criminality of the beliefs for which the sculptures were traditional foci and served to visually prove the assertion made by the *sectionnaire* Ceyrat during the festival. Standing in the pulpit he had said, “If

¹⁷⁸ Boizot returned later to complete a fuller inventory in which he specified the preservation of 85 of the 106 objects listed. Ibid, no 79.

¹⁷⁹ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 2, pp. 82–83. Boizot had asked, in his report given to the CoM on 19 November 1793, that the removal of reserved goods begin promptly. Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Boizot was “presented” to the section’s Patriotic Society on 5 February 1793. N. A. F. 2705, no. 261.

¹⁸¹ A Festival of Nature and Philosophy was held in St. Sulpice on 28 November 1793. N. A. F., 2705, no. 369. Busts of Marat and Lepeletier were inaugurated on the same day. Ibid., no. 323.

¹⁸² Ibid., no. 369.

¹⁸³ Draperies were hung over the entrances to chapels in Notre-Dame during the Festival of Liberty. Hamel op cit, p. 281.

¹⁸⁴ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission Temporaire”, vol. 1, p. 27, n.1.

¹⁸⁵ Hamel op cit, pp. 281–282.

this [Catholic] God exists, let him strike me down with a bolt of lightening!" After a pregnant pause, looking defiantly at the ceiling, Ceyrat shouted, "No lightening, so his existence is a chimera!"¹⁸⁶ The statues, by failing to perform a miracle to save themselves, had been proven to have no religious value; the Supreme Being was no longer willing to intercede for Catholics. Boizot had not judged the incinerated statues to have sufficient aesthetic or historical value to warrant saving but, nevertheless, the bonfire signified *sectionnaires*' willingness to use art in iconoclastic ways to publicise politico-religious positions. They knew that the sculptures still had religious value for Catholics. This kind of value, ignored in the official inventories of churches, was used by radical *sectionnaires* to attack Catholics.

The transformation of churches into revolutionary temples used for de-Christianising festivals put pressure on the CoM and the TCA to quickly carry out inventories. The Commune's proscription of Catholic signs also meant that the triage process had to be completed rapidly so that the officially regulated removal, destruction and/or alteration of Catholic images and symbols could begin to match the spaces' signifiatory schemes with their new uses.¹⁸⁷ Occasionally, tension developed between *sectionnaires* and the administrations charged with enforcing the proscription of signs or their preservation. For example, the members of the National Depot of Iron had declared that the grills from churches were just not worth the expense of transporting them to the crucible because they did not provide sufficient amounts of metal.¹⁸⁸ Yet, when the CoM ordered its members to inspect church grills on 3 November 1793 it noted that, despite a municipal ruling suspending such work, many grills had already been destroyed.¹⁸⁹ One can only assume that the sections were taking measures into their own hands. Certainly, sectional officials, possibly frustrated by the months of delay between proscriptive laws and action, sometimes took measures that went beyond their responsibility. The APW had ordered

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ On 30 November 1793, an inventory was made of St. Eustache by Lemonier. Only two tombs (of Colbert and Marin de la Chambre), five paintings, two altars, four columns, a multi-figure statue of St. John the Baptist, a statue of St. John and a painted altar front were reserved. A. N., F/17/1036a, dossier 6, no. 86. Lemonier made another inventory, this time of St. Roch, on 5 December. Relatively little was preserved: the La Live family tomb, Maupetius' tomb, the tomb of Bidal, two paintings, a marble annunciation scene and the grills from the choir. Lemonier emphasised that two lead figures of prophets by Pigalle had to be taken promptly to the crucible. The fact that bullets could be made out of lead made it particularly difficult to justify preserving statues made from that material. Ibid., no. 100. In Notre-Dame a list of 99 paintings was compiled on 17 November, 31 of which were to be sent to the Louvre museum, others subsequently went to temporary depots or remained *in situ*. Ibid., dossier 5. On 9 December, Moreau and Jollain accompanied Lemonier to the ex-cathedral to make an inventory of statuary. A. N., F17/1271, dossier 2, no. 13.

¹⁸⁸ A. N., F/17/1264, dossier 5.

¹⁸⁹ Tuetey op cit "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments", vol. 2, p. 66.

Varin, on 5 December 1793, to go to the cemetery of the Section de la Montagne, to “suppress an iron cross above the entrance door”.¹⁹⁰ But when the entrepreneur and his team arrived, they found workers who had been hired by the section already doing the job. This kind of “doubling of powers” was embarrassing to the municipality and meant they had to pay employees for the opportunity-cost of work they had not done. Some sections were forthright about their frustration. For example, on 28 December, Scellier wrote a letter to the APW to say that the Section de la Cité’s commissioner of hoarding was demanding that the objects that were on reserve for the museum be removed from Notre-Dame immediately because they were taking up storage space.¹⁹¹ However, even when de-signifying work began in earnest, inter-agency conflicts did not abate.

On 6 January 1794, the APW ordered the suppression of “signs of fanaticism [i.e. Catholicism] and feudalism”.¹⁹² Yet, on 12 January 1794, the Section de Mutius Scaevola, sent a deputation to the CoM, to ask when some action was going to be taken regarding the large saints’ statues from St. Sulpice’s lateral doors. The commission, not having selected the sculptures for preservation, simply said it would ask deputies from the APW to visit the section and decide on an appropriate course of action.¹⁹³ It would seem that the *sectionnaires* were either unaware that work had been ordered to begin in their temple, or that they were frustrated at having to wait for it to start once it had been authorised. However, it was not long before the scaffolder-mason Letrosne began erecting platforms from which Daujon could start work in St. Sulpice; the job would take eight weeks to complete.¹⁹⁴ Daujon’s invoice for his work in St. Sulpice is indicative of the huge scale of the project to de-signify churches. Rather than demolish objects, he sought to alter them. Above the two grand doors he changed two vases “in order to allow them to subsist”.¹⁹⁵ Throughout the church he turned rays emanating from papal keys or crosses into ribbons and chalices with rays into chalices with flames. Crowns on statues’ heads were transformed into hair, ciboriums and crosses held by figures became tree trunks and scepters were changed into olive branches. Some of the alterations were not

¹⁹⁰ A. N., F/13/967, no. 418.

¹⁹¹ A. N., F/17/1036b, dossier 2, no. 3.

¹⁹² A. N., F/13/967, no. 438.

¹⁹³ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 2, p. 131.

¹⁹⁴ A. N., F/13/967, no. 331. This time period is slightly misleading because Daujon was almost certainly working in other spaces during that period. He could delegate less technically demanding alterations and demolitions to masons. For example, as well as building scaffolds, Letrosne demolished a cross on the dome of one of the chapels, assisted with the destruction of “various coats-of-arms in wood and stone”, removed signifiers throughout the chapel of the Virgin, and contributed to the demolition and removal of four figures of Evangelists found on the fourth order of the front of the church. A. N., F/13/967, no. 438.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

simple de-significations of images' Catholic connotations. Instead, Daujon transformed Catholic signifiers into revolutionary ones. For example, a cross on the peristyle became a bunch of fasces. He said that he "suppressed the inscription on the tablets of Moses [in a bas-relief by the altar of the chapel under the right-hand tower] and carved in their place 'the rights of man and citizen'". He made royal or papal crowns or crowns of thorn into crowns of chain that symbolised the public recognition of revolutionary civic virtues. He turned chalices into pikes representing revolutionary force and a figure holding a cross and a bible was left holding a sword and a book entitled "History of the French Revolution". Daujon changed motifs within bas-relief or sculptural compositions, some in stone and some in wood. As always, he was eager to emphasise the difficulty of the work, the care he had taken and sometimes the danger he had faced.¹⁹⁶ While Gautherot condemned these alterations, one could argue that Daujon's efforts actually meant that a huge proportion of St. Sulpice's art could escape outright suppression.¹⁹⁷ The sculptor tried to make sure that the signifying scheme of the church was appropriate to its use as a meeting place for the section and as a revolutionary temple. By doing such work, Daujon also lessened the chances of *sectionnaires* carrying out the kind of unofficial iconoclastic attacks that had occurred before he arrived. For example, he noted that a statue of St. Roch, perhaps targeted because of its connection with a local confraternity and with the "plagues" of counter-revolutionary ideas, had "been all mutilated"; it was so badly damaged that Daujon could do nothing but bring it down. Another statue, "representing a St. Louis with all the attributes of royalty", had also been attacked, no doubt because of the political and religious offence a royal saint caused to republican de-Christianisers. Daujon took the sculpture down and transported it to the depot so it could be used for the "pedestal of the decreed statue" of *le peuple* planned for the Pont-Neuf. Nevertheless,

¹⁹⁶ He had clearly been frightened by the work on the roof, conducted, he said, at a "prodigious height" and in "bad weather".

¹⁹⁷ Some motifs and compositions were destroyed entirely. Throughout St. Sulpice, Daujon suppressed cherubins, angels, "trophies" of the church, "attributes and emblems of religion", statues of the Ave Maria, crosses, "letters which recall fanaticism", Jehovas and doves representing the holy spirit. A very interesting genre of imagery was destroyed *en masse* and never replaced after the revolution. Daujon suppressed four *gloires* at the entrance to the church's side doors (according to the *Petit Robert* dictionary, this was a type of imagery depicting Christ surrounded by clouds, cherubs and angels). The objects were enormous, 116 feet long, seven feet high, four feet deep, suspended 36 feet off the ground and they were made of cardboard. Nearby, he also dealt with four friezes made of cardboard; each was 11 feet long, six feet wide, six feet deep and suspended 40 feet off the ground. In the chapel of the Virgin, 20 feet off the ground, he also suppressed six gilded cardboard designs incorporating "attributes and instruments of religion". A. N., F/13/967, no. 331. From St. Eustache Daujon also removed "An immense quantity of ornaments in cardboard, heads of cherubs, groups of clouds, palms and a host of things kept in place by well-fixed metal" along with a six foot high cardboard angel. These objects were attached to the master altar's baldequin which was 50 feet high at its peak and also had a 20-foot high cardboard *gloire* fixed to it. A. N., F/13/970a, no. 932. Both churches must have looked very different, very empty and open, in the absence of all this huge lightweight imagery.

other sculptures in St. Sulpice, that Daujon had not altered because they were destined for the depot, continued to be attacked.

Towards the end of March 1794, a man called Chardin wrote a letter to the TCA¹⁹⁸ and it was read out during their meeting of 4 April.¹⁹⁹ Chardin's letter shows the concern felt by connoisseurs regarding unregulated and unofficial iconoclasm.²⁰⁰ His letter opened by saying, "With an interest in, like you, the state of conservation of beautiful things, you will without doubt find it good that I advise you that the guardians of the *ci-devant* church of St. Sulpice have assured me that they could not prevent the figures by Bouchardon, that were decorating the choir, from being exposed at all hours of the day to the indiscretion of idle and badly intentioned men." His emphasis on idleness is interesting, implying that good *sans-culottes* were not involved, for they were defined by their willingness to work; by implication this was the work of bad revolutionaries or even counter-revolutionaries. He went on to say, "The figure of St. André is mutilated, his nose is broken and I could not even find the missing piece." The literal defacing of a statue by cutting off its nose seems to have been an established form of popular iconoclasm, a type of change never conducted in official alterations of figures. The tomb of Richelieu in the Sorbonne had been attacked in the same way by men using bayonets,²⁰¹ and all of the heads of the figures from the gallery of kings from Notre-Dame, now kept in the Cluny museum in Paris, are also missing their noses.²⁰² Such an attack on an image could be carried out quickly, easily and without need for specialised tools. The Bouchardon sculptures in St. Sulpice could be attacked like this because they had been brought down from their pedestals in preparation for the move to the depot, yet they had not been transformed into revolutionary signs. Once at floor level, they were easy prey for potential iconoclasts. Chardin criticised the way in which the statues had been deposed, calling the job "haphazard". Yet, he tempered his criticism by recognising the reason that the sculptures were removed, as well as acknowledging justification for

¹⁹⁸ A. N., F/17/1264, dossier 4.

¹⁹⁹ Tuetey op cit, "Procès-verbaux de la Commission Temporaire", vol. 2, p. 124.

²⁰⁰ Given that Chardin reports only on objects from St. Sulpice, I thought that he might have been resident in the Section de Mutius Scaevola. Sadly, he did not sign his first name or address in the cited letter, as a result, I have not been able to find any definite references to him in any of the sectional or police records. The only reference to a Chardin in the records for the area is for a Chardin *père* whose house was searched on 18 January 1794: nothing illegal was found. Was this the same man, or a relative? Does it offer a motive for condemning the local section's guardianship of the art in the temple? We have no way of knowing.

²⁰¹ Souchal op cit, p. 53.

²⁰² It seems to me unlikely that the kings could all have lost their noses in the fall from the gallery, the law of averages would suggest that some statues would land on their backs. I am inclined to believe that the statues were mutilated by revolutionaries during the period that they remained on the *parvis*.

preserving them, saying, “If these pieces are hardly models that must serve us in the highest instruction, Bouchardon, nevertheless, possessed a portion of talent [...]. I believe that, just because of the character of the Apostles which they represent, which are not in accord with the empire of Reason, one cannot refuse them asylum”. It seems that Chardin was not aware that the statues were on reserve – he was trying to convince the commission to preserve them, arguing that the aesthetic and historical value of the sculptures out-weighed their unacceptable politico-religious values.

Although a decision had already been made to preserve the Bouchardon sculptures, not all reservations were agreed upon immediately and, sometimes, even the members of the CoM and/or TCA would have to defend certain objects in the way Chardin did in his letter.²⁰³ The problem was, of course, that aesthetic value cannot be calculated with anything like the same level of objectivity as material value can be. Even within the preservationist organisations, conflicts could develop over the relative material and/or aesthetic and historical value of objects. Yet, the commissioners, like Chardin, were still concerned about the safety of the objects where an official preservationist consensus had been reached and they implacably opposed unofficial iconoclasm. In fact, on 25 March, Varon had included the information supplied by Chardin in a report to the CPI on “dire degredations” in Paris and the provinces, adding that some bas-reliefs on a tomb in St. Sulpice had also been attacked.²⁰⁴ Varon pointed out that the church was now being used as a tobacco warehouse, implying that the workers there might have been responsible for the attacks. In the context of this kind of official concern, it is easy to see that many connoisseurs and artists might have supported the work of Daujon and his colleagues as a necessity; like an amputation, the gangerous limb (i.e. the proscribed motif) was cut off in order to save the body (the rest of the composition). The surviving portion could not only be kept in place without breaking the law, it was also less likely to be attacked by those who thought of the value of art mainly in terms of religious and/or political legitimacy.

Daujon’s work in churches limited the number of targets for anti-Catholic iconoclasts by re-signifying Catholic art as revolutionary and, therefore, deserving of political and

²⁰³ In their meeting of 16 December, the members of the CoM engaged in an argument about eight bronze statues of angels from Notre-Dame. Moreau argued that the sculptures were not good “models to the arts nor are they monuments that are useful to the history of art, and elsewhere there are other angels armed with the instruments of the Passion”. He added that they would be “much more useful if they were converted into canon than if they were preserved”. Eventually, he had to concede that the CPI should decide the matter because several of the commissioners “seem to be attached to these angels”. Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Monuments”, vol. 2, pp. 114–155.

²⁰⁴ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission Temporaire”, vol. 2, p. 115. The report was sent, on 30 March, to the CPS. Ibid., p. 124.

religious respect. But other work conducted on behalf of the authorities actually made some Catholic art available for attack in the same way that it had in the case of the deposed Bouchardon statues, bringing them within reach of iconoclasts. Nevertheless, in churches that were de-signified/re-signified, the number of recorded unofficial mutilations is extremely limited. The kind of work that Daujon conducted in churches can be considered to have countered the problem of unregulated iconoclasm. However, it also caused problems between the APW, the CoM/TCA and some of the sections, because it generated so much rubble and sometimes damaged the fabric of the buildings. For example, in May 1794, a series of letters were exchanged between the aforementioned authorities and the Section du Contrat Social. On 7 December 1793, Daujon had been ordered to suppress “feudal and religious signs” at St. Eustache.²⁰⁵ Essentially, the alterations and suppressions that Daujon carried out in St. Eustache, outside it and on its roof were very similar to those conducted in St. Sulpice.²⁰⁶ The work left empty spaces and “corrected” sculptures that served as indexical signs of the revolutionary rejection of Catholicism. But, while the rubble from the stripping of altars, tombs and steps in the chapels and the chipping away of motifs also acted as indexical signs, the local section was not impressed by the presence of so much mess. Daujon moved “a lot of debris” to the door of the church along with objects put on reserve by the CoM.²⁰⁷ However, much of the mess caused during the suppression work had still not been cleared up by May 1794. The civil committee of the Section du Contrat Social complained to the municipality, demanding that workers clear the gutters of the rubble left there by Daujon’s work on the roof and fix the guardhouses’ roof which had also been damaged. They said the workers would also be needed to “clean the temple that is full of gravel as a result of the demolition of the *ci-devant* chapels”.²⁰⁸ Daujon had been working for the Commune while he was altering and suppressing outside the church, and the APW agreed to pay for

²⁰⁵ A. N., F/13/970a, no. 932.

²⁰⁶ Inside, he made an interesting change to one of the *bolseries* that was in a part of the church used by the section’s revolutionary committee. He wrote, “made a wooden liberty bonnet put on top of a pike in the hands of a child who presents it to woman in a state of contemplation”. Given the questions over women’s role in politics that had so divided the local section until a few weeks before, this transformation seems to emphasise the role of women as mothers who must pass on the revolutionary message to the young. Yet, there is a strange ambiguity at work if one considers that the woman is receiving a weapon from the child. The SRRW had been heavily criticised partly because they had championed the arming of women to fight on the frontiers – a man’s role. Perhaps the piece was meant to depict the male, even as a child, as being the locus of revolutionary force. One of Daujon’s more surprising suppressions was of an eye surrounded by rays. This seems to be an odd decision, given that the symbol had been assimilated into revolutionary discourse as the “eye of vigilance”. Ibid.

²⁰⁷ For example, three figures from Colbert’s tomb, a *Baptism of John*, a white marble statue of the Virgin Mary, a bas-relief, another that had been “mutilated” and 27 paintings were all sent to the depot des Petits Augustins in the week of 17–28 February 1794. “Inventaire des richesses” op cit, p. 126.

²⁰⁸ A. N., F/13/901, dossier 4.

the guttering. But the municipal architect, Poyet, wrote, "As regards the rubble existing in the temple that it is urgent to remove so that the citizens composing the Section du Contrat Social are able to frequent this temple in which they assemble, this operation must be done on the orders and at the expense of the Agency of National Domains, as it ordained the suppression of the figures of the altar, the unsealing and undressing of the altars and the stairs and other depositions which have resulted in the depositing of rubble." Thus, once work began on suppressing any Catholic signifiers in ex-churches, it was all too possible it would end up hindering the very uses of the spaces that made their re-signification desirable. Given that different elements of each alteration job could be ordered by municipal or national agencies, it was difficult for the sections to have the problems corrected and tension could mount all too quickly between different agencies.

Occasionally, revolutionaries even questioned the efficacy of iconoclasm. An undated and unsigned letter sent to the Section de Mutius Scaevola's Patriotic Society in An II said, "What have you done to destroy fanaticism? You have believed it sufficient to fell some of the baubles which are found in certain buildings, before converting them into gravel".²⁰⁹ The author exhorted the club not to believe "that it is sufficient to annihilate the external marks of fanaticism without demonstrating the abuses and the dangers, or to believe that to destroy one must also replace with another".²¹⁰ While sympathetic towards de-Christianisation, it would appear that the author regarded the process of de-signification/re-signification of Catholic imagery as meaningless without a broader pedagogic framework that could rid Parisians of the habitual Catholic modes of reception that they still used when thinking about the new revolutionary material signs. Thus the process of suppressing representational objects merely delayed the tackling of a more profound problem. Nevertheless, official suppressions mitigated problems that concerned some agencies and individuals, limiting the amount of popular iconoclasm. But some pro-preservationist individuals, as well as the CoM and the TCA, were still concerned that the use of ex-churches as storehouses exposed objects on reserve to potential attacks. They realised that workers and *sectionnaires* did not believe aesthetic and/or historical value constituted necessary or sufficient conditions for preserving such objects. Taking legal action against unofficial iconoclasm was simply not practical, given that the courts were already over-stretched.²¹¹ All such problems were exacerbated by the

²⁰⁹ N. A. F., 2705, no. 278.

²¹⁰ Ibid., no. 279.

²¹¹ A municipal report said, "the small number of magistrates is insufficient to preserve the tranquility of this immense town". Beaufranchet d'Ayat, Santerre, Chambon, "Rapport sur l'état actuel de Paris", Paris, 1793.

fact that the whole project of dealing with proscribed religious signs was enormous, labour intensive and slow, and left *sectionnaires* frustrated by debris and damage when it was finally completed. Yet, the problems and concerns of fundamentally pro-proscription revolutionaries pale into insignificance when compared with those of Catholic Parisians, many of whom had considered themselves to be good revolutionaries until they were effectively turned into suspects by de-Christianisation.

While on 27 November even Chaumette had argued that the Commune had never thought that Catholics should not be allowed to worship peacefully in their homes or in hired buildings,²¹² officially sanctioned violence against *cultuelle* images continued at an unprecedented rate in the ex-churches. Parisians who supported official and/or unofficial iconoclasm had either never assessed the value of Catholic imagery and spaces in religious terms, or had come to regard them as politically and/or religiously illegitimate, suspending recognition of religious value. While some Catholics might have accepted that the home was the appropriate place for their worship, many must have felt betrayed by a revolution that prevented them worshipping collectively in their sacred places, surrounded by the historical “monuments to piety” that had such an active role in their daily lives. Such Catholics would almost certainly have subscribed to Souchal’s view that Daujon had a “sacrilegious chisel”, even though Daujon himself almost certainly believed that he was transforming sacrilegious Catholic images into sacred revolutionary ones.²¹³ The very notion of sacredness was in paradigm crisis and Catholic art bore the public scars of an abstract struggle between two philosophical systems.

Initially, there was considerable opposition from Catholics who would not accept the “re-tasking” of their churches. On 5 November 1793, *le Moniteur* noted that the Commune had been informed that market women from les Halles had been attacking the people selling “patriotic papers” because the women were imbued with “fanaticism”, i.e. Catholicism. Herissay claims that when the first Festival of Reason was held in St. Eustache, “a band of *sans-culottes* wanted to smash everything, altars, statues, sculptures, but then the 200 women of Mlle Rigaut appeared in front the chapel of baptisms [...]. Faced by this battalion of citizenesses, calm and resolute, the Jacobins

²¹² Aulard op cit, “Christianity”, p. 114. Similarly, distancing itself from the discredited *enragés*, the Convention ruled, on 7 December 1793, that “all violence and measures against liberty of the cults are forbidden.” Herissay op cit, p. 168.

²¹³ Souchal might also have added that Daujon had a sacrilegious pen, had he known that the sculptor referred to doves, representing the Holy Ghost as pigeons throughout his invoice for St. Eustache. A. N., F/13/970a, no. 932.

made an about turn and abandoned the place.”²¹⁴ The historian also claims that the women’s action meant that the baptismal chapel was left untouched throughout the Terror. This is not true – Daujon noted in his invoice for St. Eustache that he had taken down the baptismal font and moved it to the door. Herissay’s comment is dangerously misleading, falsely implying that the local *sectionnaires* allowed a portion of the church to maintain its Catholic function. Nevertheless, it is possible that Rigaut’s assistants did try to protect the chapel and were the same market women who had attacked *colporteurs*. They seem to have been willing to regard most of St. Eustache as no longer sacred in Catholic terms, if a compromise could be reached whereby part of it, and its contents, were left for their use. Yet no such compromise was to be reached. In effect, all of the revolutionary temples ceased to be sacred spaces to Catholics because they were handed over exclusively to the new cults. As a result, the objects in ex-churches, and those transported for storage in the secular depots and/or museums, also ceased to be sacred to Catholics.

However, the reaction of many Catholics in the Section du Contrat Social was to follow the example of non-jurors and remove portable objects from St. Eustache for storage in their homes, where religious value was respected and the objects could function as intended. For example, on 22 December 1793, Mme Boiscervoise’s house was searched and 30 items of silver belonging to St. Eustache and four belonging to the confraternity of Ste. Geneviève were found.²¹⁵ Other objects that people removed secretly from St. Eustache only reappeared in the church post-Thermidor, once the space had been re-consecrated to the Catholic cult.²¹⁶ It is very likely that the same process occurred in other parishes. Some Catholics dared to attend the masses in the chapel of the Institution de l’Enfant Jésus on the rue d’Enfer, hired out by its owner Eloy. A sign was put up outside, offering a public reminder of the right to liberty of worship.²¹⁷ But after 10 weeks of worship the Section de l’Observatoire closed the chapel, arguing that the space had “feudal inscriptions” and coats-of-arms in it which needed to be removed.²¹⁸ Thus, the proscription of signs offered an excuse to move Catholics on from one of the few

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 164.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 212. The police commissioners did not confiscate the goods – perhaps they had secret Catholic sympathies.

²¹⁶ Anon, “Notice Descriptive et Historique sur l’Eglise et la Paroisse Saint-Eustache de Paris”, Paris, 1855, part 2, p. 15. For a rather biased account of private houses used for Catholic worship, see: Jean Peyrade, “Les guillotinés de la foi”, Paris, undated.

²¹⁷ Augustin Gazier, “Études sur l’Histoire Religieuse de la Révolution Française d’Après des Documents Originaux et Inédits”, Paris, 1887, p. 218–222.

²¹⁸ Herissay op cit., p. 170.

licensed spaces in which they could worship *en masse*.²¹⁹ A new sign was erected that read “Liberty or death”.²²⁰ While it is clear that Catholics continued to use images centrally in their worship,²²¹ it is difficult to find their responses to the iconoclasm in the churches. It was in the nature of the Terror that few people were willing to speak out about subjects that might make them appear to be counter-revolutionary. As was noted above, even stating one’s opposition to the closure of churches made one a suspect in the eyes of the law. Thus, it is mainly by considering post-Thermidorian responses to iconoclasm that we can deduce what the contemporary reactions of Catholics had been to the de-signification/re-signification of churches.

5.6 Thermidorian reactions to the iconoclasm of the Terror

In a pamphlet written in 1795 about the decree of 21 June 1795, returning churches to Catholics, Faure described, “overturned sanctuaries, these statues broken and trampled under foot [...], marbles uprooted at great expense and still covering the paving of the churches, mutilated and useless”. He declared that these were “horrors committed against the objects most deserving of our veneration”.²²² Turning the old accusation of Catholic idolatry against the de-Christianisers, Faure declared his frustration at the injustice of anti-Catholic iconoclasm, “you have raised a thousand altars to those idols [liberty, law and reason]. But we have not troubled your festivals, we have not over-turned your statues, we have not outraged the object of your cult, we respect your errors without seeking to know the small number of your adepts”.²²³ Faure conveniently over-looked the fact that reactionary iconoclasm had occurred post-Thermidor, including an attack on the “idol” of liberty in the Place de la Révolution. This was the voice of Catholics whose silence

²¹⁹ Others hired different buildings. Ibid., pp. 171–172.

²²⁰ Post-Thermidor, the local section wrote to the APW to request that the phrase “or death” be removed from the sign. A. N., F/13/503/II, no. 608.

²²¹ Many prints, paintings and vases were confiscated from the houses of people suspected of harbouring priests, see: Herissay op cit, pp. 215–222.

²²² Anon, “Réligion, ou mémoires pour servir à l’Histoire du dix-huitième siècle; par une Société d’Amis de la Réligion et de la Patrie”, Paris, 1795, pp. 107–108.

²²³ Ibid., p. 156.

during the Terror spoke volumes, to whom the iconoclasm of An II had become a way of imagining the Montagnard revolution that attacked images regardless of their religious value.

Grégoire's three discourses on "vandalism" have been well documented elsewhere and, as a result, it is sufficient to say here that he argued that the destruction of art during the Terror was indicative of the barbarism of the régime. Instead of discussing the texts of the reports, I will quote from the journal with which this section's discussion began. In it, Grégoire wrote, "Friends of the arts cry over the ravages exercised in our temples, where statues have fallen by the thousand under the axe of brigands who are still among us. A mass of masterpieces are in pieces; but they could have been conserved, we still regret the loss of this quantity of monuments of the middle-ages, necessary for completing the chronological history of the arts, and which the historian, the antiquarian and the artist would have come to visit endlessly. [...] Are we a civilised nation, or a horde of savages?"²²⁴ Whereas Faure discussed the religious value of the art attacked during the Terror, Grégoire writes of the lost aesthetic, historical and pedagogic value of art. In other words, he uses the defining principles of the preservationist agencies against them and all those that they sought to regulate. Like Faure, Grégoire used iconoclasm as a discursive tool to imagine and represent the Terror, claiming that so-called "vandalism" (a term he invented) revealed the true barbarism that lay behind the period's mask of civilised enlightenment. Some post-Thermidorian print makers also made this connection. For example, one image shows a *sans-culotte* standing on lists of the Terror's victims but also on a list of "dilapidations" (fig. 53). In the background, in front of the Louvre, revolutionaries wearing red bonnets massacre women and children. The neck and chin of the fore-grounded *sans-culotte* form a silhouette of Louis XVI, the king's apparition suffocates the revolutionary as revenge for the killings of the Terror and, presumably, the delapidation of objects that had been the products of humanity, represented allegorically on the right. It is this kind of construction of iconoclasm that informs the work of Gautherot, Réau and Souchal but, like the post-Thermidorian reactionaries, these historians ignore the true diversity of revolutionary iconoclasm, its motives, its forms, its functions and the fact that all political factions had recourse to its deployment. They use iconoclasm as all revolutionaries did, to imagine and represent a partisan view of the revolution.

²²⁴ Desbois de Rochefort, H. Grégoire, J.B. Royer, G. Mauviel, "Annales de la Religion, ou mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire du dix-huitième siècle; par une Société d'Amis de la Religion et de la Patrie", Paris, 1795, p. 113.

Other print-makers used iconoclasm as a means of representing the sudden beginning and end of the period of Terror, attacking *le peuple* who were too ignorant to recognise the value of art and the errors of la Montagne. For example, a print called “Il prit, quita, reprit le cilice et la herse” depicts two men and a woman who kneel before a monstrous religious monument (fig. 54). One of the men holds a cross with a band of ribbon streaming from it, marked “Death to Republicans”. That these are people who were themselves previously republicans is signified by the title, but also by a windmill whose sails are marked “Jacobin, Atheist” on one axis and “royalist priest” on the other. The windmill connotes the fickleness of the kneeling figures, whose beliefs shifted with the variable winds of change. Lying mutilated on the floor in the right hand foreground is a statue of Liberty, one of its truncated arms props it up, while the other seems to gesture for help to the worshippers who are ignoring it in favour of the statue of Catholicism. Iconoclasm gives physical form to abstract changes of loyalty. Along with the actual post-Thermidorian iconoclasm, this print suggests that the fall of Jacobinism did not by any means undermine the symbolic potency of iconoclastic action.²²⁵

After Thermidor, iconoclasm continued to be a way of imagining/representing the revolution and a way of shaping it. But it also continued to be a resource that different levels of government could use to assert their power, legitimacy and loyalties. This point is clearly demonstrated by a protracted struggle between the Section de la Cité and various municipal and national agencies. The problems revolved around the fact that Notre-Dame, where the section met, was “destined for the use of the Cult”.²²⁶ But when the architect Le Grand inspected the building in Messidor An III he found that the galleries around the nave and the *bas-côte* were full of wine destined for the army and “the galleries around the choir, and many of the chapels are hindered by marbles coming from the stripping of this *ci-devant Cathedral*.”²²⁷ The TCA had to explain to the CPI why so much marble remained in place, “If the transport [of the marbles to the depots] has not been effected”, they said, “it was because of the scarcity of carts.” They added that the return of the churches to the Catholic cult was causing trouble for this reason.²²⁸ The affair began to generate considerable confusion over which agencies had ordered the removal

²²⁵ On 16 Thermidor An II, a speaker in the Convention called for the demolition of the Hôtel de Ville, “this Louvre of the tyrant Robespierre”. Raoul Arnaud op cit, 1909, p. 308.

²²⁶ A. N., F/13/503/II, no. 593. Letter of 14 Messidor An III.

²²⁷ Ibid. Letter of 26 Messidor.

²²⁸ Ibid. Letter of 26 Messidor.

and/or suppression of the objects in Notre-Dame that were “preventing its usage for the exercise of the cults”²²⁹ and, therefore, which agencies ought to pay to have it cleared.

Eventually the representatives of the Section de la Cité informed the municipal authorities that, in any case, they “opposed any marbles being carried from the said church because the legislation on the return of Notre-Dame to the cult had said that the building was to be “returned in the state in which it had been found”.²³⁰ In effect, the section was asserting its power over that of the municipality that was trying to empty the space and against the old policy of suppressions that had caused the problem in the first place. Instead, the section was aligning itself principally with the Convention’s new and moderate law. The CPI had to step in to resolve the matter, saying that “perhaps the claim of the Section de la Cité for the retention of the marbles that belonged to this church is well founded”, but the objects that were not inscriptions, bas-reliefs, or sculptures were to be moved nevertheless. By playing municipal and national agencies off against one another the section had won the right to retain Catholic representational objects that had been suppressed in An II but, due to the lack of transport, had simply remained in the church. All this effort had been made despite the fact that the TCA had warned that, because half of the monuments from Notre-Dame had already gone to the depot those that remained would form a “shocking multi-coloured pattern” if they were put back up.²³¹ The section’s willingness to struggle to keep control of the remaining imagery in Notre-Dame, despite the fact that many of the monuments were incomplete, only serves to show that, to the *sectionnaires*, the aesthetic and historical value of the objects was not of primary importance. The section was more concerned with the objects’ functional value to the re-established cult. Keeping the monuments was a first step in rendering the space appropriate for Catholic worship again, although much of the silverware would have to be bought back.²³² It could be argued that the Section de la Cité’s battle was an effort to signify its moderate politics, its support for the Convention as the loci of power and the section’s respect for Catholics’ right to worship freely. The revolution began with

²²⁹ Ibid. Letter dated 17 Thermidor.

²³⁰ Ibid. Letter dated 10 Vendémiaire IV.

²³¹ A. N. F/17/1049.

²³² Grégoire had railed against a government proposal that silverware in the national stores could be bought back by the parishes. “But”, he wrote, “once they have been re-bought, do they finally belong to us? If you say yes, because they will have been paid for, I observe that they have already been paid for before; if you say no, I ask you what is the point in buying that which does not belong to us? And, in fact, this is what is stopping the parishes. Who is going to tell us, they say, that having bought the necessary affects for our cult, no-one will come back in 10 years time, perhaps sooner or later, and tell us that they belong to the nation?” “Annales de la Religion” op cit, p. 114.

iconoclastic events and resistance to them and this situation had not changed with the fall of the Montagnards.

5.7 Conclusion

By considering this chapter in the context of the whole study, it is possible to identify continuities and changes in the official, semi-official and unofficial iconoclasm and discourses related to them, during the revolution. The most obvious changes concern the scale and scope of iconoclasm in the period 1793–1794. In 1793, we have seen that concerted action was taken against signs of feudalism and royalism which, despite their earlier proscription, had remained in place throughout Paris. The timing of the acceleration in the suppression of feudal signs coincided with the ejection of the moderate Girondins deputies from the National Convention. It is possible to regard the new determination to enforce proscriptive laws as being an effort by both the national and municipal authorities to signify that they would accurately represent the will of the people at a time when radicalism was advancing in the sections. To this extent, the intensification of official iconoclastic action against signs of feudalism used imagery in a comparable way to the authorities' iconoclastic decrees of 1792, as a means of signifying legitimacy. In many respects, this similarity is even more marked if we consider signs of royalism, especially the destruction of the gallery of kings at Notre-Dame, where official action was directly prompted by calls for such moves in the press and the sections. In 1793–1794, calling for official iconoclastic steps to be taken was a way for sections to assert their power just as it had been when the statues of kings were toppled in 1792. It was also a way for individuals and groups to challenge national and municipal government by implying that they were deviating from the wishes of the sovereign people; a way of driving the broader political agenda. But, like all the previous iconoclastic revolutionary events and discourses, each phase of suppressions in 1793–1794 also faced opposition from those whose political, religious and/or connoisseurial sensibilities were offended by the destruction of objects that they valued in a different way to supporters of iconoclasm. All material signs are polysemic and, as a

result, so are all attacks on them. Therefore, opposition to iconoclasm was inevitable. This point was further reinforced by this chapter's discussion of attacks made by revolutionaries on revolutionary images in late-1793.

Towards the end of 1793, semi-official iconoclastic treatment of Catholic representational objects began to increase, organised by local officials, but without the prior approval of more powerful national officials. Yet, in the context of our discussion of the treatment of material religious signs in 1791, it is obvious that such iconoclasm can be characterised as both continuity and change. The change was, once again, related principally to the scale of the assaults, and to the fact that they were organised by the Parisian sections, rather than by unofficial groups of individuals as they had been previously. But, as in 1791, Catholic art was attacked because iconoclasts had ceased to consider it to be religiously and/or politically legitimate because of its connection with a Church suspected of being actually or potentially counter-revolutionary in its actions and its teachings. When Catholic imagery was attacked and there was no divine intercession to protect it, iconoclasts thought their claims that the objects were not religiously legitimate had been vindicated; the objects were not dedicated to the true God. As such, they were not thought to be sacred in a religious sense and, accordingly, respect for their "set apartness" and their inviolability was suspended; they lost all religious value. A previously sacred statue became an "idol" and its habitual users "idolaters". The damaged or altered sign, even the space where a well known but absent object had stood, could be transformed by iconoclasm into an indexical sign of Catholicism's religious and political illegitimacy, a rallying point for de-Christianisers. Pressure groups also used iconoclasm, especially iconoclastic processions, as a resource to maneuver the Convention into a position where it had to accept the agenda set by radicals in the sections and the municipality, or face accusations of illegitimacy based on its failure to represent the peoples' will.

As such, de-Christianising iconoclasm can be seen as having had a function very similar to all previous revolutionary iconoclasm – it publicised particular political positions and placed pressure on the relevant authorities to adopt them. As in August 1792, many legislators seem to have been aware of the divisive nature of iconoclastic action; they sought to regulate it so they could control it. Nevertheless, as in the winter of 1792, when royalist signs were attacked in Notre-Dame, some unofficial de-Christianising iconoclasm in An II was the result of the municipal and/or national authorities' failure to quickly de-signify spaces whose meanings were strongly signified as revolutionary by their uses. One can argue that such unofficial iconoclasm acted as a spur to the official

process of de-signifying and re-signifying churches throughout Paris. But, ironically, the kind of alterations of Catholic imagery that Daujon conducted, changing objects' signified meanings and forms, actually discouraged and contained unofficial iconoclasm. Such official action served to prevent unregulated disturbances of the public peace in the symbolic realm. In a way, it could be said that the scale of official de-Christianising iconoclasm was actually a way for the national and municipal governments to re-assure Catholics that unregulated violence against them would not be tolerated. The enforcement of sweeping iconoclastic policies could cause inter-agency conflicts between official bodies whose roles privileged different kinds of value for signs. But it was only post-Thermidor that Catholics' and/or connoisseurs' could publicly articulate their anger at the de-Christianising treatment of art that they valued on the grounds of religious and/or aesthetic and historical value. Yet, iconoclasm did not stop with the fall of the Montagnard national government and the purging of radicals in the sections. Reactionary iconoclastic attacks took place against images associated with the Terror. What is more, calls for iconoclasm continued, as did the use of iconoclastic motifs in printed images.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This thesis has shown that the official iconoclastic policies developed by national and municipal governments were often formed in response to unofficial iconoclasm and iconoclastic discourses at the local level of Parisian politics, i.e. in the sections. I have been able to demonstrate this point by using a wider range of source material than previous studies on French revolutionary iconoclasm. This has also allowed me to show that both official and unofficial iconoclasm were possible largely because many Parisians did not establish the value of representation objects, or appropriate ways of treating them, in aesthetic and/or historical terms. Rather, many Parisians valued material signs principally in political and/or religious terms, respecting the objects' physical integrity accordingly. When objects that were deemed to represent political and/or religious ideas whose legitimacy had been undermined by broader discourses, respect for the physical integrity of the objects could be suspended. For many Parisians, the objects' aesthetic and/or historical value did not constitute necessary or sufficient conditions for respecting the physical integrity of material signs that were regarded as illegitimate; these were simply "added values". By studying a longer period than has been done in other work in this field and especially by considering the religious conflicts in 1791, I have shown that such attitudes to representational objects and appropriate ways of treating them were rooted in residual Catholic modes of reception. The mode of reception described by Christin as an "autonomised aesthetic discourse on art", that prioritised the aesthetic and/or historical value of an object, was emergent and not dominant in this period.

It was Gautherot's, Réau's and Souchal's failure to recognise the historical diversity of modes of reception that led them to condemn iconoclasts as "ignorant" "barbarians" and to label them "vandals" for attacking objects that these historians valued principally in terms that would have been largely alien to their subjects. I would argue that the study of iconoclastic actions and discourses often reveals iconoclasts' complex understanding of the ways in which representational objects functioned as signs in a period of paradigm crisis. To call iconoclasts "vandals" is more revealing of the strategies of the accuser than the accused. Furthermore, this thesis has offered other reasons to reject many of the condemnatory historians' arguments. By studying iconoclasm from the outset of the revolution until the period post-Thermidor and by showing that iconoclasm was an actual and discursive resource used by Parisians of all political and religious persuasions, I have

demonstrated that Réau was wrong to refer to revolutionary iconoclasm as “Jacobin vandalism”. I have also defended the sculptor Daujon from the grossly unreasonable criticisms leveled at him by Gautherot and Souchal. It has been shown that Daujon’s suppressions and alterations demonstrated considerable respect for the work of other artists, including that of members of the CoM who directed him to alter parts of their own works (i.e. Mouchy and Boizot). Daujon even jeopardised his own professional standing by saving church objects that had not been officially designated worthy of preservation. In addition, I have shown that Gautherot’s accusation that Daujon suffered from cupidity are based on ignorance of the economic imperatives faced by artists operating in this period. Finally, it has been seen that Souchal’s complaint that Daujon had “no sense of the sacred” is founded on the historian’s inability to recognise that the category of “sacredness” was in a state of paradigm crisis in this period and is no more a trans-historical, trans-cultural constant than is art.

As well as my points about the formulation of official iconoclastic policy and the prevalence of residual modes of reception, this study’s other major contribution to its field has been the demonstration of a connection between the uses of spaces and the treatment of representational objects within them. I have shown that the changing uses of spaces and changing representations of them in prints, paintings and words led to competing spatial “codes” (in a Lefebvrian sense). That is to say, different people came to believe that different kinds of behaviour were appropriate in specific spaces and that the spaces had different meanings to the ones imposed on them by their old uses and/or the representational objects in the spaces. This could lead to a desire to de-signify and re-signify the spaces through the destruction, removal or alteration of representational objects visible within these spaces. The goal of such iconoclasm was to ensure that the meaning of a space, as signified by its use and its place in broader discourses, matched the meaning that material signs signified it as having. Focusing my discussion on a relatively small number of case study spaces has allowed me to discuss their changing uses and representations in depth in order to make this important point.

Finally, it is appropriate to return to the question posed in the introduction, stemming from the TCA’s observations “the degradations that occur most often involve objects of sculpture”.¹ Why was this? I believe that the answer lies partly in the privileged position that statuary had in Catholic worship; miraculous and intercessionary sculptures were many, equivalent paintings were few. As we have seen, two-dimensional images were

¹ Tuetey op cit, “Procès-verbaux de la Commission Temporaire”, vol. 1, p. 440.

sometimes used in a subservient way in relation to Catholic sculptures, being left in thanks for assistance elicited from the statue's prototype. Equally, many widely available religious prints represented not a saint but a famous statue of a saint. As a result, if unofficial anti-Catholic iconoclasm was directed against sculptures, it was likely to cause maximum offence to the very people towards whom iconoclasts wished to signify their antipathy. One could also argue that sculpture, in its three-dimensionality, could serve as a particularly obvious substitute for the bodies of those whose ideas it was associated with and whom iconoclasts were attacking *in absentia*. Equally, sculpture is a medium that can be used to signify spaces that are out-of-doors and revolutionaries often gathered in such spaces to press their causes, be they anti-royalist or anti-Catholic. This, coupled with the symbolically overbearing size of much external monumental statuary, especially the sculptures of kings, made it a convenient and desirable target. Paintings, on the other hand, were mostly hidden incongruously inside buildings and were, as a result, less visible and less likely to provoke offence. What is more, paintings could be more readily moved out of harm's way by preservationists, whereas the size and weight of sculpture meant it often remained in place, amidst people who found it offensive because of its old privileged role and its size. However, regardless of the notable targeting of sculpture over other types of representational objects, it is important to conclude this study by noting that all forms of iconoclasm, against all kinds of objects, demonstrate that, to use generic terms, late eighteenth-century Parisians believed in the power of signs and in their own power to intervene in the symbolic universe.

**PAGE
NUMBERING
AS ORIGINAL**

Bibliography of cited texts

l'abbé *, "Profanation arrivée en l'église Saint-Roch le 18 janvier 1791", Paris, 1791**

L'Académie Françaises, "Dictionnaire de l'Académie Françaises. Nouvelle Édition, Augumentée d'un Supplément, où a ajouté les Mots qui ne se trouvent point dans le Dictionnaire de l'Académie", Nismes, 1787

Jean Adhemar, "Les Musée de cire en France, Curtius, le 'banquet royal' les têtes coupées" in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1978

M. Alletz, "Dictionnaire theologique, contenant l'exposition et les preuves de la révélation, de tous les dogmes de la foi et de la morale; les points de controverse, les hérésies les plus célèbres, et les opinions differentes des principaux théologiens scholastique", Paris, 1767

l'Ami du Roi

D.... d' Amiens, "Réflexions en vers sur un buste de M. le comte de Mirabeau soutenu d'une pierre de la Bastille, placé dans l'église de St. Eustache, et servant de pendant à celui de M. de Chevert", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Adresse aux paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Adresse des dames de La Halle à Assemblée nationale, séance du 27 août 1791, au soir", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Adresse présentée à l'Assemblée Nationale, par les membres de la ci-devant Confrérie de S-Roch à S-Sulpice. Le 28 août, 1' 4e de la Liberté. Imprimée par l'ordre de l'Assemblée Nationale", Paris, 1792

Anon, "Adresse à tous les français, ou Exposition religieuse et patriotique des sentiments et la doctrine du Nouveau Clergé de Paris, sur la Constitution civile de la Clergé décrétée par l'Assemblée Nationale et sanctionnée par le Roi", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Amende honorable à Dieu et Sainte-Geneviève", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Club des Cordeliers. Pétition de la Société des Amis des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, aux Représentants de la Nation", Paris, 21 June 1791

Anon, "Détail de la défaite d'une armée de béguines fouettées hier au soir sur le quai des Théatins. Amende honorable et flagellation d'un aristocrate qui a méprisé les ordres du peuple", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Détail de la Grande Révolution Arrivéé en l'Eglise de Saint-Sulpice, Hier à Sept Heures du Soir", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Détail de l'horrible complot et exécration sacrilège commis dans l'église de Saint-Roch, par des brigands inconnus qui ont volé les vases sacrés et foulés les saintes hosties dans un tas d'ordures, sous le passage Saint-Roch", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Détail de ce qui s'est passé hier dans les églises de Paris, au sujet du serment décrété par l'Assemblée nationale", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Détails sur le travail des Comités de l'assemblée Relativement à tout le mobilier des maisons ecclésiastiques, et religieuses et notamment à tous monumens [sic]", 1790

Anon, "Discours Prononcé dans l'Eglise de Saint-Eustache, le Samedi 26 Septembre 1789, à la Bénédiction des Drapeaux du Bataillon de St. Jacques-de-l'Hôpital", Paris, 1789

Anon, Etat des vaiselles d'or, d'argent, & bijoux, reçus à l'Hôtel de la Monnoie [sic] de Paris, par Commission établie en vertue du loi du 28 Septembre 1792. Extrait du Procès-verbal de la dite Commission, jusqu'au 30 Novembre dernier", Paris, 1793

Anon, "Extrait du procès-verbal de la Section de la Butte des Moulins, du 5 Août 1793", Paris, 1793

Anon, "Extrait du registre des Conclusions du Chapitre de Paris", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Extrait du Registre des délibérations de l'Assemblée générale des Citoyens de la Section de l'Observatoire. Du Jeudi 29 Mars 1792, l'an 4e de la Liberté", Paris, 1792

Anon, "Extrait du registre des délibérations des Assemblées Générales de la Section du Luxembourg. Du samedi, quatrième jour d'avril, l'an quatrième de la Liberté", Paris, 1792

Anon, "Grand Requisitoire de la Brulure du Pape et de son Bref", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Histoire des évevements arrivés sur la paroisse S.Sulpice pendant la révolution", Paris, 1792

Anon, "Histoire de la statue miraculeuse de Notre-Dame de Bonne-Déliverance vénérée dans la Chapelle des Religieuses hospitalières de Saint Thomas de Villeneuve, à Paris", Paris, 1844

Anon, "A journal during a residence in France from the beginning of August to the middle of December, 1792. To which is added an account of the remarkable events that happened at Paris from that time to the death of the late King", London, 1793

Anon, "Letters from Paris during the Summer of 1791", London, 1792

Anon, "Lettre à M. Gobel, Évêque titulaire de Lydda, et Intrus de Paris", Paris, April 1791

Anon, "Lettre à un membre de l'Assemblée nationale, sur l'état du travail des Domaines nationaux et de la conservation des monumens, [sic] bibliothèques, etc. lors de la clôture de l'Assemblée nationale constituante; par un membre du Comité d'aliénation", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Manuel à l'usage des paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice, pour le pèlerinage du Mont-Valérien dans l'octave de l'Exaltation de la Sainte-Croix", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Notice Descriptive et Historique sur l'Eglise et la Paroisse Saint-Eustache de Paris", Paris, 1855

Anon, "Petit Carême de l'abbé Maury, ou sermons prêchés dans l'Assemblée des enragés. Sermon de controverse pour le jour de la mi-carême 1790, entre l'abbé Maury et l'abbé Fauchet", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Petition des paroissiens de Saint-Sulpice à l'Assemblée Nationale", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Procession solennelle Des Dames Frippieres de la Halle & des Marchands du Cimetière des Innocents; Suivie du Compliment à M. de la Fayette. Le Mardi 18 Août 1789", Paris, 1789

Anon, "Réflexions sur le Fanaticisme, Par un véritable ami de la révolution Française", Paris, 1791

Anon, "Religion, ou mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire du dix-huitième siècle; par un Société d'Amis de la Religion et de la Patrie", Paris, 1795

Anon, "Réponse à la déclaration d'une partie de l'Assemblée Nationale, publiée avant-hier, ou Adresse d'un bon Chrétien à cette Section de l'Assemblée Nationale, réunie en l'Eglise des Capucins, dans le cours d'Avril 1790", Paris, 1790

Anon, "Section de la Cité. Procès-verbaux de la fête civique, célébrée le jour de l'inauguration des bustes de Lepelletier et Marat. Représentans du Peuple, morts victimes de leur dévouement à la Patrie", Paris, an II

Anon, "Tarif pour l'évaluation des Vaiselles et Bijoux d'Or, portés aux Hôtels des Monnoies [sic] rédigé après les prix fixés par le décret de l'Assemblée Nationale du 6 Octobre 1789, & la proclamation du Roi", November 1789

"Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860. Recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises", Paris, 1969

Raoul Arnaud, "Journaliste, sans-culotte et Thermidorien. Le fils de Fréron 1754 – 1802", Paris, 1909

Marcel Aubert, "La cathédrale de Notre Dame de Paris", Paris, 1909

Alphonse Aulard, "Christianity and the French Revolution", London, 1927

Alphonse Aulard, "Le Culte de la Raison et le Culte de l'Être Suprême (1793 – 1794), Paris, 1892

Alphonse Aulard, "Paris pendant la réaction Thermidorienne et sous le directoire", Paris, 1899

Beaufranchet d'Ayat, Santerre, Chambon, "Rapport sur l'état actuel de Paris", Paris, 1793

Abbé Barruel, "Histoire du Clergé pendant la Révolution Française, Paris, 1793

Etienne Barry, "No. 3. Discours sur les dangers de l'idolatrie individuelle. Prononcé dans le Temple de la Morale de la Section de GUILLAUME TELL, le 2e Décadi, 20 Fructidor, l'an 2e. de la République Française, une et indivisible. Par Etienne Barry Jacobin régénéré", Paris, 1794

Pierre Bernard, "Profession de la foi de Pierre Bernard; Prêtre de Paris, Avocat, Membre de l'Université et Président du Comité de la Section de la Place-Royale, prononcé en l'église royale et paroissiale de Saint-Paul, à l'occassion du Serment civique ordonné par l'Assemblée Nationale aux fonctionnaires publics ecclésiastiques, imprimés d'après le vœu de Messieurs les Paroissiens", Paris, 1791

Edmond Biré, "The Diary of a Citizen of Paris During the "Terror"", London and New York, 1896

Camille Bloch & Alexandre Tuetey, "Procès-verbaux et rapports du Comité de Mendacité de la Constituante 1790–1791", Paris, 1912

Philippe Bordes and Régis Michel, "Aux Armes et Aux Arts! Les Arts Pendant La Révolution 1789–1799", Paris, 1988

F. Braesch, "La Commune du dix Août 1792. Etude sur l'Histoire de Paris, 20 Juin au 2 Décembre 1792", Paris, 1911

- Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, “Les sculptures de Notre-Dame de Paris récemment découvertes”, Paris, 1977
- Paul Brouissac (ed.), *Iconicity: Essays on the Nature of Culture*, Tübingen, 1986
- Jean-Marie Bruson et al, “La Révolution Française – Premier Empire. Dessins du musée Carnavalet”, Paris, 1983, p. 130
- Bronislaw Baczko, ‘Ending the Terror: The French Revolution after Robespierre’, Cambridge, 1994
- Mikhail Bakhtin, “Rabelais and his world”, London, 1984
- Isabelle Bourdin, “Les sociétés populaires à Paris pendant la Révolution”, Paris, 1937
- Cynthia A. Bouton, “Gendered Behaviour in Subsistence Riots; the Flour Wars of 1775, *Journal of Social History*, 23, 1989–1990
- M. Boyer-Brun, “Histoire des caricatures de la révolte des français. Par M. Boyer de Nîmes, auteur du Journal du Peuple. Tome premier”, Paris, 1792
- Carnaval [pseud.], “Le Carnaval politique de 1790, ou Exil de Mardi-Gras à l’Assemblée Nationale, aux Tuileries, au Châtelet, et à la Commune”, Paris, 1790
- Musée Carnavalet, “Le Palais Royal” catalogue of the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, Paris, 1988
- Cérutti, “Lettre de M. Cérutti à Madame ***”, Paris, s.d. (1791?)
- Chaumette, “Mémoires de Chaumette sur la Révolution du 10 Août 1792”, Paris, 1893
- Marie Cerati, “Le Club des Citoyennes Républicaines Révolutionnaires”, Paris, 1966
- William L. Chew III, “A Bostonian Merchant Witnesses the Second French Revolution”, London, 1992

Olivier Christin, "Le May des Orfèvres: Contribution à l'histoire de la genèse du sentiment esthétique", in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 105, December 1994

J.A.S. Collin de Plancy, "Dictionnaire critique des reliques et des images miraculeuses", Paris, 1821

R. P. Nicholas Collin [Doctor of Theology], "Traité des processions de l'Eglise Catholique", Paris, 1779

Roger Chartier, "The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution", Durham and London, 1991

Le Chronique de Paris

Un citoyen Bret, nouvellement réfugié dans la Capitale, "Lettre à M. l'abbé Aubert rédacteur des petits affiches de Paris, Sur un moyen certain, et qui lui est proposé, de donner successivement plus de vogue à son journal [sic]; suivie d'un projet de vent par décret forcé d'un très-beau et magnifique royaume, quoiqu'en toute roture, à la barre de l'assemblée nationale, et terminée par quelques réflexions politiques sur les affaires du temps présent", Paris, 1790

Jacques de Cock et Charlotte Goëtz (eds.), "Jean-Paul Marat oeuvres politiques 1789-1793", Brussels, 1993

Collins Consise English Dictionary, Glasgow, 1995

"Colloquium of Clermont-Ferrand 'Révolution Française et 'Vandalisme Révolutionnaire'", Paris, 1992

Commission of Monuments, "Compte Rendu à la Convention Nationale, par le Commission Supprimée des Monuments. Et servant de Réponse au Rapport du Comité d'Instruction publique", Paris, 1794

J. P. Costard, N. Fallet, A. G. Contant d'Orville, "Dictionnaire universel historique et critique des moeurs, loix, usages et coutumes civils, militaires et politique, et des

ceremonies religieuses et superstitieuses, tant ancien que moderne, des peuples des quatre parties du monde”, Paris, 1772

Le Courier des 83 Départements

Bernard Cousin, “Ex-votos de Provence: images de la religion populaire et de la vie d’autrefois”, Paris, 1981

Thomas E. Crow, “Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France”, London, 1995

Thomas E. Crow, “Painters and Public Life in eighteenth-century Paris”, Yale, 1991

Abbé Odon-Jean-Marie Delarc, “L’Église pendant la Révolution Française, 1789–1801”, Paris, 1838

Diderot & D’Alembert, “Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers”, Berne and Lausanne, 1782

Le R.P. Jean-Emmanuel B. Drochon, “Histoire illustrée des Pèlerinages français de la Très Sainte Vierge”, Paris, 1890

J. A. Dulaure, “Nouvelle Description des Curiosités de Paris”, Paris, 1791

Alphonse Dupront, “Sacre, Autorité, Pouvoir: profil d’anthropologie historique” in *Le Sacre des Rois. Actes du Colloque international d’Histoire sur les sacres et couronnements royaux (Reims 1975)*, Paris, 1985

Abbé Dusquesne, “Les Grandeurs de Marie, ou Méditations pour chaque Octave des Fêtes de la Sainte Vierge”, Paris, 1791

“Eloge Historique d’Edme Bouchardon, Sculpteur du Roi. Lû à l’Académie de Peinture le 4 Septembre 1762”, Paris, 1762

M. des Essarts, “Dictionnaire universel de Police”, Paris, 1788

Cissie Fairchilds, "Marketing the Counter-Reformation. Religious Objects and Consumerism in Early Modern France", in Christine Adams, Jack R. Censer and Lisa Jane Graham (eds.), *Vision and Revisions of Eighteenth-Century France*, Pennsylvania, 1997

Antoine-Etienne-Nicolas des Odoards Fantin (Vicaire-Général d'Embrun), "Dictionnaire raisonné du gouvernement, des lois, des usages, et de la discipline de l'Eglise, Conciliés avec les libertés, franchises de l'Eglise Gallicane, Lois du Royaume, et Jurisprudence des Tribunaux de France", Paris, 1788

Arlette Farge, "Fragile lives. Violence, Power, Solidarity in Eighteenth-Century Paris", London, 1993

Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, "Logiques de la foule. L'affaire des enlèvements d'enfants, Paris, 1750", Paris, 1988

Arlette Farge, "Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France", London, 1994

L'abbé Féraud, "Dictionnaire critique, de la langue Françaises", Marseille, 1788

Piganiol de la Force, "Description Historique de la Ville de Paris et de ses Environs", Paris, 1765

Dario Gamboni "The Destruction of Art. Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution", London, 1997

Augustin Gazier, "Études sur l'Histoire Religieuse de la Révolution Française d'Après des Documents Originaux et Inédits", Paris, 1887

François Gendron, "La Jeunesse Dorée, Épisodes de la Révolution Française", Quedec, 1979

Jean-Auguste Gosselin, "Vie de M. Emery, neuvième supérieur du séminaire et de la Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice", Paris, 1861

Henry Frederic Groenvelt, "Letter Containing an Account of the Late Revolution in France and Observations on the Constitution, Laws, Mores and Institutions of the English", London, 1792

Jules Guiffrey, "Les Images des Confréries Parisiennes", in *Société d'Iconographie Parisienne*, Paris, 1910

M-J Guillaume, "Procès-verbaux du Comité d'Instruction Publique de la Convention Nationale", Paris, 1893

Anthony Halliday, "David's *Marat* as Posthumous Portrait", in William Vaughan & Helen Weston (eds.), *David's Death of Marat*, London, forthcoming

Charles Hamel, "Histoire de l'église de Saint-Sulpice", Paris, 1900

James Hastings (ed.), "Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics", New York, 1914

Andrew Hemingway, "The 'Sociology' of Taste in the Scottish Enlightenment", in *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 12, 2, 1989

Robert Herbert, "Baron Gros's Napoleon and Voltaire's Henri IV" in Francis Haskell, Anthony Levi, Robert Shackleton (eds.), *The Artist and the Writer in France. Essays in honour of Jean Seznec*, Oxford, 1972, pp. 52–53

Jacques Herissay, "La vie religieuse à Paris sous la Terreur (1792–1794)", Paris, 1952

D. Hermant, 'Destructions et Vandalisme pendant la Révolution Française', in *Annales ESC*, July–August 1978

René Héron de Villefosse, "Pèlerinages Parisiens", Paris, 1947

Sándor Hervej, "Semiotic Perspectives", London, 1982

F-J Hilarion, "Notice historique sur la statue miraculeuse de Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix, vénérée dans la chapelle de la Congrégation des Sacrés Coeurs de Jésus et de Marie, et de l'adoration perpétuelle du Très-Saint Sacrement de l'Autel, à Paris", Paris, 1837

Jacques Hillairet, "Dictionnaire des rues historiques de Paris", Paris, 1966

Stanley J. Idzerda, 'Iconoclasm During the French Revolution', in *American Historical Review*, vol. LX, no. 1, Oct. 1954

"Inventaire des richesses d'art de la France. Archives du Musées des Monuments Français", Paris, 1886

Gustave Isambert, "La vie à Paris pendant une année de la Révolution", Paris, 1896

Robert Isherwood, "Farce and Fantasy. Popular Entertainment in Eighteenth-Century Paris", Oxford, 1986

François Jacquemart, "Remarques historiques et critiques sur les Abbayes, Collégiales, Paroisses et Chapelles supprimées dans la ville et faubourgs de Paris, d'après le décret de l'Assemblée Constituante du 11 février, 1791, Paris, 1792

Steve L. Kaplan, "Religion, Subsistence and Social Control: The Uses of Sainte Geneviève", *Eighteenth-Century Studies* XVIII, Winter 1979/1980, pp. 142–168

Jeffry Kaplow, "Louis-Sébastien Mercier. Le tableau de Paris", Paris, 1998

Emmet Kennedy, "The Jacobin Clubs in the Revolution: the Middle Years", Guilford, 1988

Thomas S. Kuhn, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions", London, 1970

Sigismond Lacroix, "Actes de la Commune de Paris pendant la Révolution", Paris, 1920

S. Lami, "Dictionnaire des Sculpteurs de l'Ecole Française", Paris, 1910

Claude Langlois, "Le spectacle de la religion dans la gravure révolutionnaire (1789–1791), in *Pratiques religieuses dans l'Europe révolutionnaire (1770–1820)*, Brepols, 1986

Modeste Laugier, “Le dénonciateur du paganisme renaissant, ou adresse aux Assemblées des Districts; pour demander qu’on érige en Paroisses les Eglises des Religieux”, Paris, 1790

L’abbé Lebeuf [H. Cocheris], “Histoire de la ville et tout le diocèse de Paris”, Paris, 1754

Dom H. LeClerq, “L’Église Constitutionnelle”, Paris, 1934

Henri Lefebvre, “The Production of Space”, Oxford, 1991

James Leith, “Space and Revolution. Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France 1789–1799”, London, 1991

Le Moine (Citoyen de la Section Lombards), “Le Parallèle du Paris de la République avec le Paris des Rois”, Paris, 1792

Serge Leroux, ‘Tendances iconoclastes dans la pensée jacobine’, in *Les cahiers scientifiques*, no. 72, 1989

Darline Gay Levey, Harriet Branson Applewhite, Mary Durham Johnson, “Women in Revolutionary Paris 1789–1795”, London, 1979

Madame de ***, “Lettre de la Très-Sainte Vierge Marie, Mère de Dieu, à tous les Curés et Fabriques des Paroisses du Royaume de France”, Paris, 1789

Marcel Marion, “Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles”, Paris, 1968

L’abbé Maury, “Esprit, pensées et maximes de M. l’abbé Maury député à l’Assemblée nationale”, Paris, 1791

John McManners, “The French Revolution and the Church”, London, 1969

Louis-Sébastien Mercier, “Astraea’s Return: or, the Halcyon days in France in the year 2440: A dream”, London, 1797

Louis-Sébastien Mercier, "Paris Pendant la Révolution (1789–98), ou, Le Nouveau Paris", Paris, 1862

Jeffrey Merrick, "Politics on Pedestals. Royal Monuments in Eighteenth-Century France", in *French History*, 5, no. 2, 1991

Danièle Menozzi, "Les Images, l'Église et les Arts Visuels", Paris, 1991

Aubin-Louis Millin, "Antiquités nationale, ou recueil de monumens pour servir à l'Histoire générale et particulière de l'Empire français, tels que Tombeaux, Inscriptions, Statues, Vitraux, Fresques, etc. tirés des Abbayes, Monastères, Châteaux, et autres lieux, devenus domaines nationaux", Paris 1791

Le Moniteur

Le Moniteur universel

Monvel, "Discours fait et prononcé par le citoyen Monvel dans la section de la Montagne, le jour de la Fête de la Raison célébré dans la ci-devant église de Saint-Roch, le 10 Frimaire, an II de la République, une et indivisible", Paris, 1793-94

Musée des Beaux-Arts, "Images de la Révolution: l'imagerie populaire orléanaise à l'époque révolutionnaire", Orléans, 1989

Benjamin Nathans, "Habermas's *Public Sphere* in the Era of the French Revolution", in *French Historical Studies*, 16, no. 3, 1990

Winfred Nöth, "Handbook of Semiotics", Bloomington, 1990

"The New Oxford Dictionary of English", Oxford, 1998

Mona Ozouf, "Festivals and the French Revolution", London, 1988

Palloy, "Discours Prononcé en Présence des Bataillons de Volontaires et Citoyens d'Épernay, le 23 Septembre 1792, l'an IV de la Liberté et Premier de l'Égalité: Pour

Répondre au Calomnies Répandues par le Ministre Roland et Autres, Contre le Patriote Palloy”, Paris, 1792

Palloy, “L’Épitaphe de Mirabeau, placée en l’église Saint-Eustache, le 12 mai 1791, jour auquel les apôtres de la liberté de M. Palloy, de retour de leur mission dans les 82 départements, ont fait célébrer un service funèbre à la mémoire de ce grand homme”, Paris, 1791

A. Patrick, “The Men of the First French Republic”, London, 1972

Michel Perrot, “Discours de Michel Perrot. Imprimé sous les auspices de la Section de Mutius Scaevola, par Arrêté de l’Assemblée générale, du 15 messidor, an deuxième”, Paris, An II

Le Petit Robert, Paris, 1993

L’abbé Edouard Pinet, “La compagnie des porteurs de la Châsse de Sainte-Geneviève 1525–1902”, Paris, 1902

Bernard Plongeron & Robert Pannet (dirs), “Le christianisme populaire, les dossiers de l’histoire”, Paris, 1976, p. 188. Louis XIII made his declaration on 10 February 1638. Marcel Marion, “Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles”, Paris, 1968

Edme de La Poix de Ferminville, “Dictionnaire ou traité de la Police Générale des villes, bourgs, paroisses et seigneuries de la campagne”, Paris, 1771

William L. Pressly, “The French Revolution as Blasphemy. Johan Zoffany’s paintings of the Massacre at Paris, August 10, 1792”, London, 1999

“Procès-verbal de l’Assemblée Nationale”, Paris, 1792

L. M. Prudhomme, “Histoire Impartiale de Paris”, Paris, 1824

Révolutions de Paris

Julien Ries (ed.), "L'Expression du sacré dans les grandes religions", Paris, 1986

J-F Robinet, "Dictionnaire historique et biographique de la Révolution et l'Empire 1789–1815", Paris, 1975

Daniel Roche, "Journal of My Life by Jacques-Louis Ménétra", New York, 1986

Daniel Roche, "The People of Paris", Lemington Spa, 1987

Desbois de Rochefort, H. Grégoire, J.B. Royer, G. Mauviel, "Annales de la Religion, ou mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire du dix-huitième siècle; pr un Société d'Amis de la Religion et de la Patrie", Paris, 1795

Roland, "Rapport du ministre de l'Intérieur à la Convention Nationale; Sur l'état de Paris. Du 29 Octobre 1792, l'an premier de la République", Paris, 1792

R. B. Rose, "The Making of the *Sans-Culottes*. Democratic Ideas and Institutions in Paris 1789–92", Manchester, 1983

Adolphe Schmidt, "Paris pendant la Révolution, d'après les rapports de la police secrète 1789–1800", Paris, 1894

Serviteur de Varenne, "Projet d'un monument à eriger pour le Roi et nosseigneurs des états-généraux", Paris, 1790

Une Société de Religieux er de Jurisconsultes, "Dictionnaire Ecclésiastiques et cononique portatif, ou abrégé méthodique de toutes les connaissances nécessaires aux Ministres de l'Eglise, et utiles aux Fidèles qui veulent s'instruire de toutes les Parties de la Religion", Paris, 1777

Alexandre Sorel, "Le Couvent des Carmes et le Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice Pendant la Terreur", Paris, 1863

G. Sprigath, 'Sur Le Vandalisme Révolutionnaire (1792–1794)', in *Annales historiques de la révolution française*, 1980, no. 52

Henri Stein, "État des Objets d'Art", Paris, 1890

Jean Stern, "Belle et Bonne, une fervente amis de Voltaire (1757–1822)", Paris, 1938

Alexandre Tuetey, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments 1790–1794", Paris, 1902–1903

Alexandre Tuetey, "Répertoire générale des sources manuscrites de l'histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution Française", Paris, 1890

Louis Tuetey, "Procès-Verbaux de la Commission Temporaire des Arts", Paris, 1912

Richard Twiss, "A Trip to Paris in July and August 1792", London, 1792

Vachard, "Installation de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, auteur du Contrat-Social, Dans la société des Indigens, amis de la constitution, séante rue Jacob, vis-à-vis celle Saint-Benoît", Paris, 1791

de Vassière, "Lettres de "Aristocrates", Paris, 1907

A. Vaton, "Recherche historique sur les paroisses de Paris. Saint-Roch", Paris, 1841

François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, "The Philosophical Dictionary", London, 1785

Michel Vovelle (ed.), "Paris et la Révolution", Paris, 1989

Michel Vovelle, "La représentation populaire de la monarchie", in Keith Michael Baker (ed.), *The French Revolution and the creation of Modern Political Culture*, Volume 1, Oxford, 1987

Anne M. Wagner, "Outrages: Sculpture and kingship in France after 1789", in Anne Bermingham and John Brewer (eds.) *The Consumption of Culture 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*, London, 1995

H. Wallon, "Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris, avec le journal de ses Actes", Paris, 1880

Hermann Weber, "Le Sacre de Louis XVI le 11 juin 1775 et la Crise de l'Ancien Régime", p. 261 in *Le Sacre des Rois. Actes du Colloque international d'Histoire sur les sacres et couronnements royaux (Reims 1975)*, Paris, 1985

Jean Georges Wille, "Mémoires et journal de Jean Georges Wille graveur du Roi", Paris, 1857

E. N. Williams, "The Ancien Régime in Europe. Government and Society in the Major States 1648–1789", London, 1970

Richard Wrigley, 'Breaking the code: interpreting French Revolutionary iconoclasm' in Alison Yarrington and Kelvin Everest (eds.), *Reflections of Revolution: Images of Romanticism*, London, 1993

Manuscript Sources

Please note that in most cases multiple documents were consulted from each of the boxes listed below. Whenever possible, precise references for dossiers and document numbers are provided in the main body of this study's text.

Archive de la Prefecture de la Poilce

AA. 81

AA. 82

AA. 83

AA. 85

AA. 90

AA. 93

AA. 134

AA. 148

AA. 163

AA. 166

AA. 167

Nouvelles Archives Française. Bibliothèque Nationale (Richelieu)

N. A. F. 2704

N. A. F. 2705

N. A. F. 2674

N. A. F. 2667

Archives Nationale

F/7/4662

F/13/202

F/13/207
F/13/312c
F/13/503/II
F/13/727
F/13/898
F/13/901
F/13/902
F/13/962
F/13/964
F/13/966
F/13/967
F/13/968
F/13/970a
F/13/1047
F/13/1935
F/17/1032
F/17/1033
F/17/1036A
F/17/1036B
F/17/1037
F/17/1038
F/17/1046
F/17/1050
F/17/1051
F/17/1053
F/17/1261
F/17/1262

F/17/1263

F/17/1264

F/17/1265

F/17/1272